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FBI, NYPD Find No Evidence of Any New Threat to NYC After Iraqi Prime Minister Indicates Attack

Source: <http://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local/Terror-Threat-New-York-City-Subway-ISIS-Iraq-MTA-Transit-277087501.html>

There is **no evidence** of any new, specific threat to New York City's subway system, according to intelligence sources asked about potential developments after the Associated Press reported the Iraqi prime minister said his country's intelligence operation uncovered a plot for an imminent attack.

The mayor and the police commissioner also said in a news conference they assessed the prime minister's "vague" statements and found no credible threat.

The Associated Press reported Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi said Thursday he was told of

the alleged plot by Baghdad, and that it was the work of ISIS in Iraq. Asked if an attack was imminent, he said, "I'm not sure," according to the AP. He also said the United States had been alerted about the threat, according to the AP, but security officials tell NBC 4 New York that is not true.

No overseas partner told U.S. law enforcement of any new or specific such threat, a senior security official said, nor have authorities at the FBI, NYPD, Port Authority or MTA uncovered evidence indicative of any new, specific plot targeting the city's transportation system.



Mayor Bill de Blasio and Police Commissioner Bill Bratton ride the subway to Union Square as a show of assurance that the city is as safe as ever.

"The first we heard of this threat is when the press began reporting it," the official said.

At a briefing at the Union Square subway station, Mayor Bill de Blasio and Police Commissioner Bill Bratton said they assessed the prime minister's statements and found "no credible threat," but police will remain "ever vigilant," said de Blasio.

The city has already been on high alert due to the United Nations General Assembly and the Jewish high holidays, Bratton said, and that

heightened security level "can be very quickly enhanced."

De Blasio and Bratton assured New Yorkers that they should feel "very comfortable and very secure riding the subways," according to Bratton.

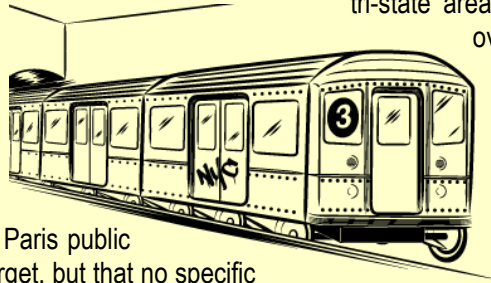
The police commissioner added that he and the mayor had just taken the subway to Union Square with Yankees fans on their way to Yankee Stadium to



celebrate Derek Jeter's last home game there. Nevertheless, the mayor urged residents to remain as vigilant as always.

"Law enforcement depends on everyday citizens to alert us to any potential threat," he said.

Al-Abadi made the initial remarks in a media roundtable. In expanded remarks to NBC News later, an Iraqi official clarified the prime minister's statements, saying the Paris public



transit system was a target, but that no specific target in the United States had been revealed.

A federal security official said the prime minister's comments "took us security officials by surprise." Another senior official said, "We don't know what he is talking about."

An internal Homeland Security bulletin to law enforcement agencies said the department's intelligence unit has been working with multiple intelligence community partners to try to identify the kind of threat reports that al-Abadi referred to.

But "no similar threat reporting can be located," stated the bulletin, obtained by NBC News. "Nor is it clear who, or what agencies in the United States Government were alerted."

Authorities are looking into the source of his information and comparing it against past "open source" intelligence from about a month ago alleging a possible threat against the metropolitan area's commuter rail system, but they stress they have found no new threat to local infrastructure.

Nothing about the prime minister's statement has been validated and no one knows where his information came from, one New York security official said.

The NYPD said in a statement it was aware of the prime minister's statements and was in close contact with the federal law enforcement agencies "as we assess this particular threat stream."

"New York City normally operates at a heightened level of security and we adjust that posture daily based on our evaluation of information as we receive it," the statement said.

Officials have stepped up security across the tri-state area **in response** to the ISIS threat overseas in weeks out of an abundance of precaution.

Last week, a post on an ISIS message board titled "To the Lone Wolves in America: How to Make a Bomb in Your Kitchen, to Create Scenes of Horror in Tourist Spots and

Other Targets" encouraged readers to attack sites throughout the country, including Times Square.

Earlier this week, the extremist group purportedly released a new audio that warned Americans "you will not feel secure even in your bedrooms."

On Wednesday, Govs. Cuomo and Christie announced a bi-state agreement to coordinate intelligence-gathering and share information as part of a plan to step up security in the wake of the threat overseas. A senior security official told NBC 4 New York if tri-state area residents notice a ramping up of security on trains Thursday, it's because of that agreement and the general threat environment, not because of the remarks by Iraq's prime minister.

The bi-state agreement to substantially increase security at transportation hubs and critical infrastructure in the metropolitan area is effective immediately. Over the next 100 days, law enforcement and military personnel will join forces within the metropolitan area to engage in counterterrorism operations by increasing visibility, inspections and surveillance on and at trains and train stations, airports, landmarks, and bridges and tunnels, according to the plan.

The two states will also participate in a joint emergency exercise in the coming months and continue to evaluate methods for increased intelligence and emergency coordination.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: What I liked most from this article is the accompanying photo! Most probably Mayor's PR people believe that New Yorkers are stupid enough to think: "Oh! The Mayor is using the subway. So it is SAFE!" Old fashion reacts to cover the inability for pre-emptive measures... and when they say: "no evidence found" what do they mean? A bomber with a suicide vest or a backpack full of explosives? Come on people!



Female UAE pilot 'leads strikes' on jihadists

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2014/09/female-uae-pilot-strikes-on-jihadists.html>



A female pilot has led United Arab Emirates air strikes that targeted Islamic State jihadists in Syria as part of the US-led campaign against extremists.

Major Mariam al-Mansouri, 35, "led the squadron" of UAE fighter jets that participated in raids Tuesday against the extremists, an Emirati source familiar with the matter said.

The UAE did not confirm officially that a woman was among the pilots that conducted the raids.

Mansouri is reportedly the first female UAE pilot of a fighter jet. She graduated from Abu Dhabi's Khalifa bin Zayed Air College in 2007 and is veteran pilot of F-16 warplanes.

Washington has said the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Jordan, took part in the strikes on the Islamic State, which has seized swaths of Iraq and northern Syria.

Saudi Arabia on Wednesday released photographs of eight airmen it said were involved in Tuesday's US-led operations.

One of the pilots is a son of Crown Prince Salman bin Abdul Aziz, according to Saudi newspapers.

Mansouri's participation in the raid stirred a debate on social media networks, with supporters posting her picture on Twitter and commending her service.

"She is taking part in crushing the dens of Daesh," wrote one woman on Twitter, using an Arabic acronym for IS.



Angry Islamist sympathisers, however, slammed Mansouri's "criminal" act.

The UAE is a largely conservative Gulf state, where women citizens wear the traditional Islamic head cover and black Abaya loose cloak.

But authorities in the oil-rich state have made efforts to put pioneering women forward and many women have assumed top government positions



The Arab world debates Islam and IS

Source: <http://www.dw.de/the-arab-world-debates-islam-and-is/a-17954060>

"I will never agree that the country to fight IS should be the United States," says Qatari



religious scholar Dr. Yousef al-Qarawadi - even if he is opposed to the ideology and practices of the "Islamic State" terror group.

"They are not guided by Islamic values, but rather by their own interests - even if it amounts to blood being shed," the 88-year-old tweeted to the world, causing something of a stir.

With his Al-Jazeera-broadcast program, "Al-Sharia wa' hayat" (Sharia and Life), al-Qarawadi ranks as one of the most popular television preachers in the Arab world.

committed by IS," asked political commentator Tariq Alhomayed in the daily newspaper Al-Sharq al-Awsat. "Is al-Qarawadi really against IS?"

Arguments such as those put forward by al-Qarawadi had become outdated, Alhomayed went on to say. "We are currently experiencing a total rejection of religious extremism, be it Sunni or Shiite."

Differing views of IS

The role of Islam with regard to the atrocities being carried out by IS is being debated intensively in public. A fault line has emerged between national leaders and some supporters of IS in the populations they govern, according to Raghida Dergham, a columnist in pan-Arab newspaper Al-Hayat. "Governments have described IS as an 'existential threat,' while there are sections of the public that sympathize with the group and its motives," writes Dergham, adding that some of the support came from those who saw it as a counterweight to a perceived increasing Shiite dominance.

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IS fighters assemble to pray in the Syrian city of Raqqa, where the group is based

Al-Qarawadi's comments chimed with some, but also met with sharp criticism.

"How are we supposed to understand this position when we see it in light of all the crimes

The disagreements go further still, according to Al-Hayat - as deep as the understanding of Islam itself.

What does it permit? What does it allow? Theological appraisals of this differed wildly.



For the majority, Islam cannot be held responsible for IS actions, which themselves had nothing to do with Islam, thereby divorcing the idea of Islam and the IS brand terror.

At a conference last week in the Saudi Arabian capital Riyadh, however, others described IS as the embodiment of "pure Islam." As a result, they would not have linked IS with the concept of terrorism.

'Need to take stock'

Large parts of the political elite saw the situation completely differently, Dergham added. At the meeting, the former Kuwaiti Information Minister Saad bin Mohammed bin Tefla blasted the religious traditions and practices that IS invokes.

"We still cannot say that these people have nothing to do with Islam," Al-Hayat reported bin Tefla as saying. The former minister's conclusion shows just how far the debate had progressed.

"Do IS, Hezbollah and the Muslim Brotherhood represent political Islam or not? The answer is yes," he surmised. "These groups reflect on the fatwas of political Islam in everything they do. It is therefore high time that we take stock of ourselves and turn our attention to the values of our educational system and curricula."

The discussion about Sunni and Shiite extremism and its relationship to Islam come as the aircraft used by the US-led coalition have hit IS positions in Syria, as well as Iraq, for the first time.

Questions further down the road

The air attacks, according to military observers, is critical to dealing with IS decisively. As long as it can be supplied and reinforced from Syria, IS cannot be defeated in Iraq. There is apparent agreement within the coalition about the short-term goal - to weaken or even destroy IS. However, what might happen after the possible destruction of the terrorist group remains open.

Already, in a meeting at the end of August in the Saudi city of Jeddah, the foreign ministers of several Arab countries have agreed to seriously and comprehensively address the risk of "terrorist extremist ideology."

The discussion is particularly helpful, says al Hayat's Dergham, given the differing views of IS within the Middle East.

"It will not be enough solely to engage in a serious war with IS. Only by political means, also, will it be possible to win the necessary support of the population against IS."

MA in Terrorism and Security Studies

Source: <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/warstudies/study/graduate/tss.aspx>



Terrorism is a multi-faceted issue that requires multi-disciplinary solutions. The MA in Terrorism, Security and Society exposes students to the constantly evolving theories and paradigms needed in order to understand past, current and future trends in terrorism and counter terrorism. This programme adds a unique element to the way in which issues of terrorism and security are understood through engagement with staff within the Department of War Studies and via our strong working relationships with external partners (e.g. policy-makers, government and industrial security practitioners, military organisations, communities, and more) from around the world. In-class debates and assignments will be directly informed by research and practice.

For example, the optional module, Responding to Terrorism, brings practitioners from the worlds of national and local government, policing, intelligence and industry into the classroom to discuss the remit and challenges of their professional worlds. Students are then required to develop an official response programme to an interactive DVD scenario involving a CBRN terrorist attack. Overall, the interactive and engaging nature of the programme will enable students to combine and apply the well-honed multi-disciplinary approaches that characterises the work of the Department of War Studies.

Vibrant and varied student community

Our students come to us from a variety of national and international academic and professional backgrounds. Our unrivalled mix of 'professional' (e.g. Police, FCO, RAF, local government, security, law, media, and more) and 'traditional' students creates an



interactive, engaging and dynamic classroom experience. For example, successful applicants will find themselves working alongside peers from more traditional War Studies backgrounds such as History, War Studies, Political Science, International Relations. Less traditional pathways have drawn students from Psychology, Engineering, Computing, Biology, Journalism, Design and Classics to our door. This broad mix of academic skills is complimented by 'professional' students who work at the coalface of counter terror policy and practice. This diverse mix of backgrounds leads to intense and engaging class discussions. Some of our students have chosen to take the debates beyond the classroom through the development of a student-led international politics commentary website, The Risky Shift (www.theriskyshift.com). The MA in Terrorism, Security and Society will prepare students for a range of roles beyond on the MA. For example, graduates have moved on to careers within governance (e.g. the United Nations, the Metropolitan Police Service, Homeland Security, Defence and Foreign Offices in their respective countries, intelligence services, Public Health services, and others). Private sector careers include Deloitte, Barclays, Goldman Sachs, G4S Risk Management, HIS Jane's, Pelham International, Protection Group International, Price Waterhouse Coopers. Some graduates have opened their own consultancy companies, others have gone to work for think tanks (e.g. IISS, the Hudson Institute, RUSI, the Institute for Strategic Dialogue), and others have gone on to undertake PhD research at King's and beyond.

Programme Structure

The core module, Terrorism and Counterterrorism, will provide knowledge and understanding of the various approaches to studying terrorism and counterterrorism. Lectures and seminars will cover the history, evolution of relevant concepts, case studies and current issues in order to provide students with the means of assessing the concepts critically.

Students can then choose from a wide variety of options such as the previously mentioned Responding to Terrorism, Home-grown Radicalisation and Counter-Radicalisation in Western Europe and North America, Complex Political Emergencies, Health & Security, Contemporary British Defence Policy, International Politics of the Middle East, Natural Resources and Conflict, and many, many more. Our students choose diverse, individual combinations of modules in order to address their interests and career goals. Finally, dissertation topics are as varied as the combination of optional modules. Recent topics include, but are not limited to: Terrorism, Insurgents, Transnational Organised Crime and Trafficking; Public Communication in Acute CBRN Incidents in Norway; Assessing Jihadist Presence in the Tor Darknet; 'Game-changer?' What do Drones Really Mean in the War against Terrorism?; and Radicalisation and Extremist Media Dissemination. A number of students have taken up internships with Public Health England (formerly the Health Protection Agency), Mid-Kent Police, 6Alpha, and more in order to in order to obtain access to unique data and to produce information that can be used in practice during their dissertation study.

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US to Build Three Military Bases in Kurdistan Region

Source: <http://basnews.com/en/News/Details/US-to-Build-Three-Military-Bases-in-Kurdistan-Region/35489>

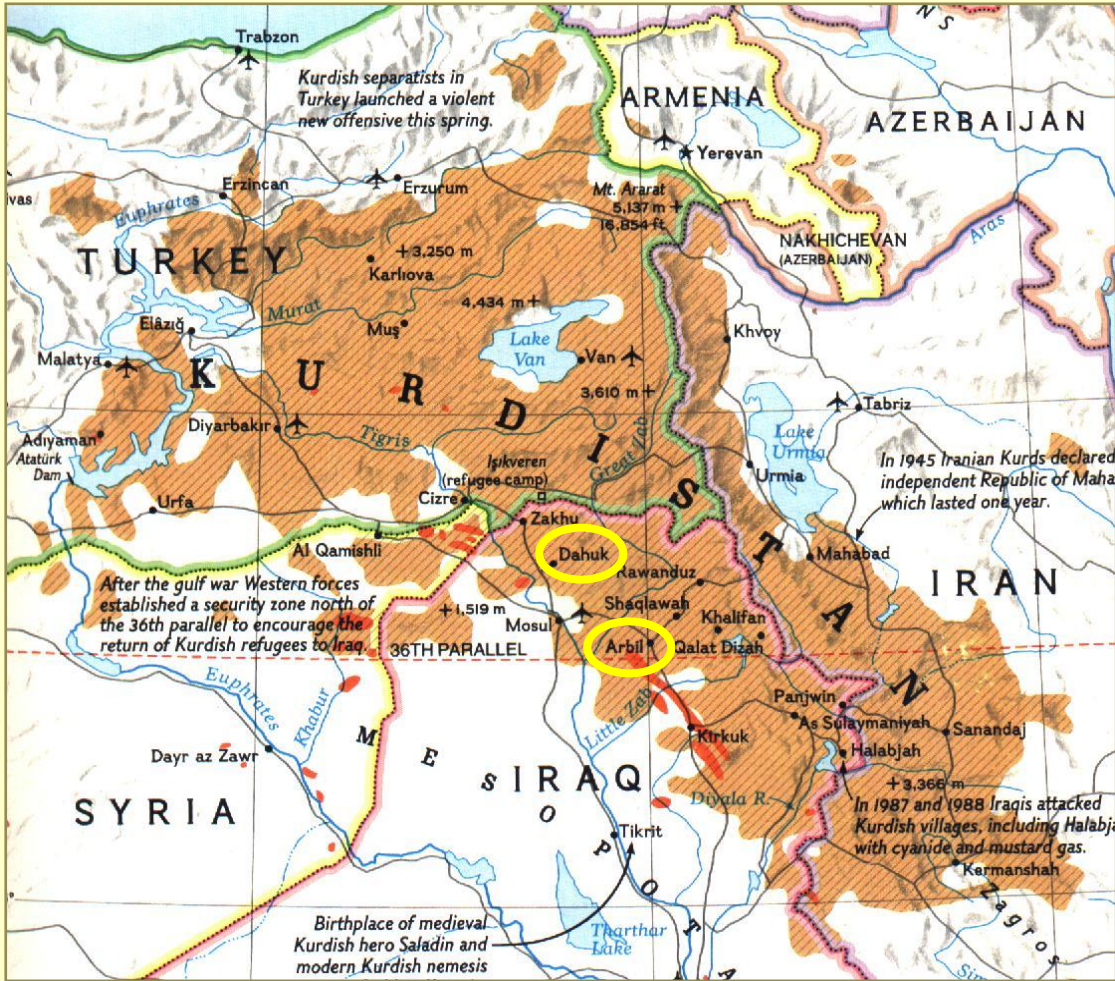
Pentagon is planning to build three different military bases in Iraqi Kurdistan region in a near future.

According to Kurdish sources, Washington wants to build more military presence in the region in the wake of recent Islamic State (IS) militants against Kurdistan region in northern Iraq.



BasNews has learned through a close source from the matter, that United States to build three military bases in Erbil and around the Kurdistan Capital.

One of the Military bases would be in Arbil, another one would be in Hareer military base a town north of Erbil and the third one would be in Atrush a town close to Dohuk, near the Turkish border, according to BasNews sources.



The Atrush base would be used for Apache Helicopters, as it flown in and out from the base. However, the source that spoke on condition of anonymity, that none of the US military bases would be located in or close to Sulaimaniyah the second largest city in Kurdistan region, and close to Iranian border, due to presence of Iranian army and soldiers in the city.

Earlier this week, Pentagon Press Secretary Rear Admiral John Kirby talked about the possibility of US military base in Iraqi Kurdistan in a near future.

'I don't want to mix Incirlik (US military base in Turkey) and Erbil. In Erbil, we have a mutual military operation center as US President Barack Obama revealed, where we have stationed drones and other weapons,' said Kirby.

'Erbil is important because it is close to the areas of northern Iraq that IS militants have controlled and wish to keep. For this reason Erbil is important. Since we decided to open military air bases in Erbil and Baghdad, their importance has become clearer day by day,' added Kirby.

Since the start of IS insurgent attacks against Iraqi Kurds, US warplanes has bombed the terrorist groups continually and Kurdish Peshmerga forces has been able to stop the Jihadi group advances.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: The next level of the geopolitical chess game from the US School of grandmasters! And us – naive people – thought that IS was the main target!



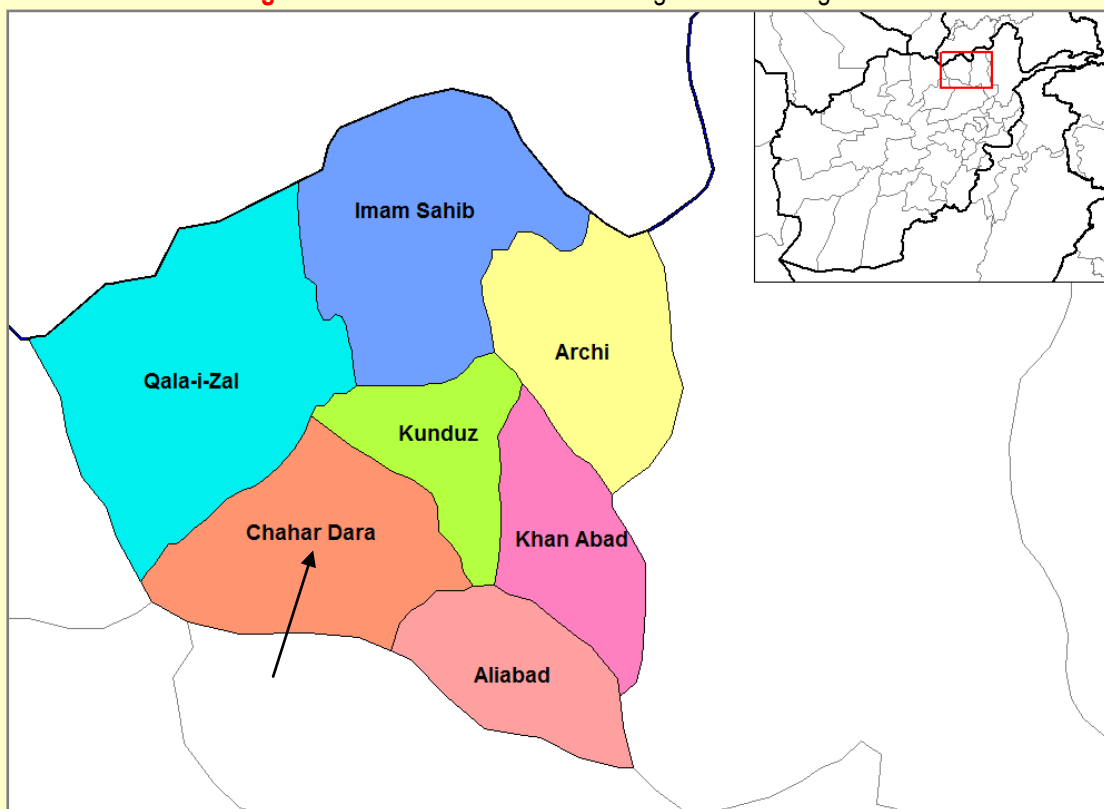
Taliban Devise New Strategy in Afghanistan: Territorial Control and War on Afghan Intelligence Headquarters

By Waliullah Rahmani

Source: [http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews\[tt_news\]=42881&tx_ttnews\[backPid\]=7&cHash=eb779e32a5a12f58e0131a9533cc5e37#.VCWVRRaPwxA](http://www.jamestown.org/single/?tx_ttnews[tt_news]=42881&tx_ttnews[backPid]=7&cHash=eb779e32a5a12f58e0131a9533cc5e37#.VCWVRRaPwxA)

September 26 – **On September 10, 2014, Kunduz province’s police chief, Ghulam Mustafa Mohseni, announced that a longtime Taliban stronghold, the Chahar Dara district of northern Afghanistan, had been cleared of insurgents.** Mohseni added

September with a group of 19 suicide attackers targeting the National Directorate of Security (NDS) provincial headquarters in Ghazni province. The attack, which lasted for a few hours, was highly sophisticated and brutal, killing and wounding around 180 civilians and



that the Taliban lost around 210 members in the operations (ToloNews, September 10). The large number of Taliban casualties in Kunduz is one of the many instances of the widening insurgency in Afghanistan. Militants increasingly have been able to carry out attacks with hundreds of people fighting Afghan government forces for days and weeks in order to gain territorial control over specific strategically located areas of Afghanistan. Along with these major and well-coordinated battles in the field, insurgents are now being used as assets in a clearly drawn intelligence war targeting the Afghan security establishment, with a particular focus on the Afghan domestic intelligence agency. The latest of these attacks was conducted in early

security personnel (*Daily Mail*, September 4). **Large groups of Taliban fighters in combat and an intelligence war are the two main pillars of a strategic shift in the broader strategy of the Afghan insurgency.** This shift demonstrates that the Afghan insurgency has changed dramatically in 2014, as the country is heading toward a transformed role for NATO forces left in Afghanistan coupled with a political transition that has been underway for the last five months. Success for various groups of insurgents operating under the Taliban’s banner could be a game changer and would allow the reemergence and reestablishment of a brutal regime in Afghanistan.



Struggle for Territorial Control

Since June, the Taliban have waged four major direct assaults in four Afghani provinces. The largest operation conducted so far has been in Helmand province. **Reports suggest that 800 to 1,000 Taliban insurgents were involved in major assaults on the Sangin, Nawzad, Mui Qala and Kajaki districts** (BBC, June 25).



Fighting there continued for weeks until the Taliban were defeated and areas were cleared; around 100 militants were reportedly killed during the fighting. The Taliban then shifted their operations to northern Afghanistan's Kunduz province where they fought for weeks to take control of the Khan Abad, Chahar Dara and Dashte Archi districts. As a result, they lost tens of their people and fought the Afghan security forces for weeks (ToloNews, August 24). Eastern Nuristan was another target of the Taliban in late August. Afghan security forces waged an eight-day operation to regain control of the province's Doa Ab district, killing around 30 Taliban (ToloNews, August 29). After being repulsed on three fronts, more than 1,000 insurgents then launched another operation in northwestern Farayab province in a struggle for territorial control of the Qaisar and Ghormach districts. The attacks continued for around a week and resulted in over 130 insurgent casualties (Pajhwok, August 18).

The deterioration of the security situation and a drawn-out, disputed political process has paved the way for the undertaking of a new strategy by the Taliban in Afghanistan. A senior security official in the Afghan government told Jamestown on the condition of anonymity that the Taliban's efforts for major gains in territorial control is planned mainly for 2015 when the NATO-led ISAF forces will be fully withdrawn and a fragile and weakened Afghan state will have the burden of stabilizing Afghanistan alone. Due to the political instability that emerged during the long-time disputed

elections and an uncertain NATO presence, however, the Taliban began implementing their new strategy in 2014, a strategy that the Afghan official termed as a defeated one. [1]

Intelligence War

From the outset of the post-Taliban state in Afghanistan, there have been discussions of a proxy war that is underway in Afghanistan. Senior Afghan officials have always pointed fingers at Pakistan for supporting the insurgency in Afghanistan. [2] Pakistan and its foreign policy masters have continuously denied any involvement in the destabilization of Afghanistan. They have called on the Afghan leaders to stop their so-called "blame-game," which Islamabad has always deemed destructive to bilateral relations.

A new chapter of the intelligence war has already begun in the form of the growing insurgency, which is directly targeting strategic national security institutions of Afghanistan, the most productive and critical tools in the broader counter-terrorism and counter-insurgency efforts of the country.

In a chronological view, 2012 was the outset of a number of selected attacks targeting the Afghan domestic intelligence agency, the National Directorate of Security (NDS). On December 6, 2012, Asadullah Khaled, the then-head of the NDS, survived an assassination attempt though he was seriously injured in the attack. This was followed by the January 13, 2013 assault on the NDS headquarters in the heart of Kabul (al-Jazeera, December 7, 2012). Attacks on the NDS and the regional offices continue through today. More recently, on May 6, the Delaram district office of NDS came under attack by unknown insurgents. In Jalalabad, on August 30, a heavy and devastating assault was launched on the provincial office of NDS, a few kilometers away from the Khyber Pass on the eastern border (ToloNews, September 18). The latest attack occurred earlier this month in Ghazni province, in which more than 18 people were killed, around 150 were injured and several government buildings worth at least \$85 million were destroyed (*Daily Mail*, September 4).

While it is not clear why the Taliban would be motivated enough to wage sophisticated and costly operations against a specific security establishment



in Afghanistan, an in-depth look into the last two years of the blame game could yield a better understanding. The Taliban



have claimed responsibility for all of these attacks, but on various occasions the Afghan government has blamed Pakistan instead for targeting Kabul. [3] Recently, Islamabad blamed the Afghan NDS of plotting the June 8 attack on the Karachi airport. However, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) and the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) claimed responsibility for that attack, which lasted several hours (*Guardian*, July 9). Soon after this accusation by Islamabad, on July 2, the Kabul airport was hit by two rockets, which destroyed a military facility and a number of helicopters. This attack was followed by one on July 17, in which five suicide attackers captured a nearby building in order to then attack the Kabul airport. Soon after the second attack, the Afghan Ministry of Interior (MoI) blamed the Haqqani Network and the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency. A MoI spokesman stressed that the attack on the Kabul airport was plotted to avenge the coordinated attack on the airport in Karachi (*Khaama Press*, July 17).

Moreover, the serial targeting of NDS offices in various provinces of Afghanistan became a main pillar of the current insurgent strategy after Pakistani authorities accused the current acting director of the NDS, Rahmatullah Nabil, of having a hand in the Karachi airport attack in

mid-June. The Afghan government denied any involvement (*ToloNews*, June 22).

While no documents have been presented to uncover the role of the NDS behind the alleged plots against Pakistan, a recent public statement from outgoing Afghan president Hamid Karzai clearly states why, from his perspective, Islamabad is supporting instability in Afghanistan. In return for stability and an end to the Afghan insurgency, Pakistan wanted the Durand Line resolved as well as sole control over Afghanistan's foreign policy and international relations, demands that Karzai has never accepted. [4]

Many in Kabul believe that the nearly continuous attacks on the security establishment of Afghanistan have become a key pillar of the Taliban's new strategy. If true, a settlement of the Afghan insurgency and peacefully ending the current instability in Afghanistan may be an impossible goal.

Conclusion

The Taliban insurgency's new approach features large attacks across the country designed to seize and maintain control of territory as well as the specific targeting of intelligence branches. **These two methods are tactically and strategically threatening the future of a functional and stable Afghan state.** At the same time, **Afghans are experiencing the end of the NATO-led ISAF mission.** In spite of the difficult security transition taking place and the uncertain political transition, in 2014, Afghan security forces have responded enormously well to the new tactical and strategic shifts of the insurgency even in the most volatile southern regions of Afghanistan. Nevertheless, it is feared that the "resolute mission" of international forces in Afghanistan will not be enough to sufficiently curb terrorism and the insurgency, which threatens to take control of even larger swaths of Afghan territory following the reduced role for U.S. and NATO force in Afghanistan in 2015.

► Notes are available at source's URL.

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EDITOR'S COMMENT: Is there still war in Afghanistan? I have forgotten almost everything about it since the coalition is about to return home or relocate to other parts of this planet needing "assistance"!



Taliban Behead 12 People in Remote Afghan Province

Source: <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/afghanistan-taliban-behead-12-civilians-25773716?singlePage=true>

September 26 – **The Taliban beheaded 12 Afghan civilians, mostly family members of local policemen, in an assault that was part of a week-long offensive that has so far killed 60 people and wounded scores in a remote province in eastern Afghanistan,**



officials said Friday.

However, a Taliban spokesman in Ghazni province denied the reports of beheadings and civilian slayings, insisting the insurgents were only fighting Afghan forces there.

The violence comes amid the annual Taliban offensive, which this year will be an important gauge of how well Afghan government forces are able to face insurgent attacks ahead of the withdrawal of foreign combat troops at the end of the year.

According to the Ghazni provincial deputy police chief, Asadullah Ensafi, the Taliban on Thursday night captured and beheaded 12 civilians and torched some 60 homes in an attack in the province's district of Arjistan.

Details were sketchy because of the remoteness of the rugged mountainous area, about 100 kilometers (60 miles) southwest of the capital, Kabul, but Afghan officials said that women and children were believed to be among the casualties. There are no NATO troops stationed in the district.

Beheadings are rare in Afghanistan, though they occasionally take place as part of the

Taliban campaign to intimidate and exact revenge on the families of Afghan troops and security forces.

"We don't have the time for this (beheadings) while we are fighting," Taliban spokesman Qari Yousaf told The Associated Press over the phone. "These reports are baseless and a lie."

The offensive in Ghazni comes as Afghanistan readies to inaugurate the country's new president, Ashraf Ghani Ahmadzai, who officially takes over from Hamid Karzai on Monday.

Over the past week, the Taliban have been attacking several villages in Ghazni's Arjistan district, Ensafi said, and battles in the area were still raging Friday, he said.

On Friday morning, the Taliban detonated a car bomb in front of an encampment where some 40 Afghan policemen were based in Arjistan, killing at least 8 policemen, said the province's deputy governor, Mohammad Ali Ahmadi.

Ensafi said it was not immediately possible to reach the area to determine the exact number of casualties because the insurgents had mined the roads.

Ahmadi, who also confirmed the beheadings, said that attack and the car bomb brought the overall death toll in the Taliban offensive in Ghazni to 60. The victims included both civilians and policemen, he said.

Ahmadi said Afghan commandos have been airlifted from Kabul to the area to battle the Taliban and prevent the district from falling to the insurgents.

In Kabul, Ghazni lawmaker Nafisa Azimi said the situation in the province remains very dangerous, adding that the Taliban have taken scores of civilians from Arjistan hostage.

Yousaf, the Taliban spokesman, claimed the insurgents were in full

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control of Arjistan and that the government was trying to "save face" over its losses by accusing the Taliban with "false reports" of beheadings and civilian deaths.

Fighting between insurgents and Afghan forces was also underway Friday in Gizab district in the southern province of Uruzgan, said Abdullah Khan, the district governor. He said the Taliban were now in control of almost 80 percent of that district and were trying to capture the governor's office there.

"I alerted superiors in Kabul but we have gotten no response so far," Khan said. "If we don't get reinforcements soon, we might lose the district."

He said the situation in Sangin district in neighboring Helmand province was similar and that the Taliban there had also captured most of the district.

There was no immediate comment on the fighting from the central government in Kabul.

Each spring and summer brings an escalation in fighting in Afghanistan with

the end of snowy winter weather, which hampers movement. The melting of the snows also opens up mountain passes, allowing militant forces to move in from neighboring Pakistan.

The country's new president, Ghani Ahmadzai, is expected to sign a security agreement — perhaps as early as next week — that allows some 10,000 U.S. troops to remain in Afghanistan after all combat troops are withdrawn by the end of the year.

A protracted dispute over the results of a June presidential runoff with allegations of widespread fraud had delayed the signing of the deal.

But on Sunday, Ghani Ahmadzai and his rival for the post, Abdullah Abdullah, signed a power-sharing deal after Afghanistan's election commission named Ghani Ahmadzai the winner of the election and noted that Abdullah would fill the newly created position of chief executive, a post akin to prime minister.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Yes! There is still war in Afghanistan! And Taliban seem to adapt IS techniques for domination on the local populace. Perhaps a picture from the near future when foreign troops will leave the country after their successful intervention.

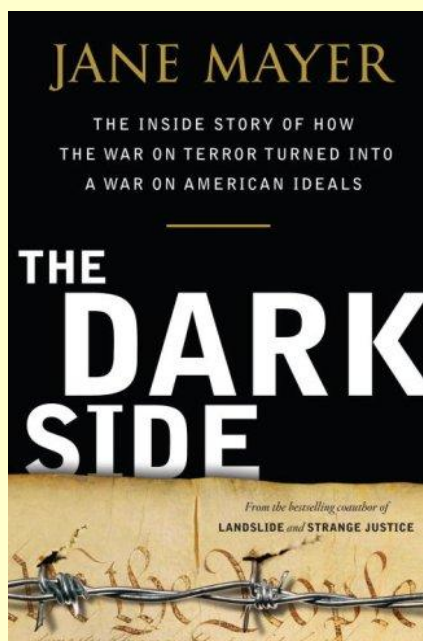
The idiotic myth that everyone believes about fighting terrorism

By Ryan Cooper

Source: <http://theweek.com/article/index/268793/the-idiotic-myth-that-everyone-believes-about-fighting-terrorism>

One of the most pernicious tropes in public life is the idea of the even trade-off between security and freedom. Tony Abbott, Australia's atrocious new prime minister, invoked it in a recent speech justifying broad new "anti-terrorism" powers because of the threat from ISIS:

Regrettably, for some time to come, the delicate balance between freedom and security may have to shift. There may be more restrictions on



some so that there can be more protections for others. [The Intercept]

By this view, freedom and security are on a simple, straightforward see-saw. Take from one side, automatically get more on the other. Repeal the Fourth Amendment and the murder rate plummets. Burn down habeas corpus and the Bad Guys start dropping dead of their own accord. Such a view might contain a grain of truth in certain circumstances — like curfews in an active war zone, for instance. But when it comes to



counterterrorism, this is a complete crock. Just consider for a moment how terrorism is done. Would-be attackers sneak around their target nation, assembling the tools needed to carry out an act of violence against citizens, trying to avoid notice by the authorities or by regular citizens who might turn them in. This isn't like fighting the Japanese Navy.

Thus, **the first and most important step to fighting terrorism is simple bureaucratic competence and professionalism.**

This has been notably absent from American institutions both before and after 9/11. **In her book *The Dark Side*, Jane Mayer details one particularly egregious incident.** Shortly before the 9/11 attacks, an FBI agent named Miller, working on loan at the CIA, repeatedly tried to send intelligence to the FBI brass that an al Qaeda member had entered the United States. His supervisor ("Mike," real identity unknown) at the CIA twice refused. But:

Oddly, three hours after "Mike" told Miller to hold off on sending the memo, formally known as a Central Intelligence Report, he nonetheless notified his bosses that the information had been shared with the FBI. The CIA assumed from then on that it had been. But it never was. The contradiction has never been explained. An investigator with the 9/11 Commission who tried to sort through the details said of "Mike," "He said he couldn't remember what happened." Astonishingly, "Mike," the investigator later learned, was given a promotion by the Agency after September 11. [The Dark Side]

In other words, it was a pattern of fumble-fingered bureaucratic goofs and pointless pissing matches, *not* the lack of an illegal torture program, that prevented American agencies from stopping 9/11.

After the attacks, the CIA shamefacedly handed over all the intelligence it had been holding on al Qaeda. Then—FBI interrogator Ali Soufan, by all accounts just about the best counterterrorism specialist this country has ever produced, was in Yemen at the time. He described his reaction to seeing the reports for the first time:

I walked out of the room, sprinted down the corridor to the bathroom, and fell to the floor next to a stall. There I threw up...The same thought kept looping back:

"If they had all this information since January 2000, why the hell didn't they pass it on?" My whole body was shaking. [The Black Banners]

As Mayer notes, according to a 2007 CIA Inspector General report, something like 50-60 people in the CIA were aware that two members of al Qaeda were inside the United States, yet none of them told the FBI.

It didn't get any better after 9/11 either. After the pointless brutality, the most striking characteristic of America's post-9/11 counterterrorism policy has been the sheer amateurism. The CIA designed its illegal torture program by copy-pasting from the Special Forces program for resisting abusive treatment — which doesn't even have anything to do with gathering intelligence from interrogation. Totally inexperienced chumps were put in charge of major interrogations, over the howling objections of competent agents like Soufan, and they achieved nothing. Later, videotapes of those interrogations were destroyed out of a fear of prosecution. After some stunningly incompetent spycraft, 23 CIA agents were convicted of kidnapping by Italian courts. Another innocent German citizen, confused with someone else with a similar name, was kidnapped off the street and tortured.

This raises the question: If our security agencies have been so wretched, why haven't we been attacked again by al Qaeda or someone similar? The first conclusion is that policy hasn't been 100 percent bad. The FBI is still better than the CIA, and some programs (strengthening cockpit doors, for instance) are good. **But the deeper conclusion is that that there are only a handful of people who would commit terrorist acts, and stopping them is pretty easy.** Major attacks like 9/11 are very hard to execute. But spree killings with a simple firearm would be quite easy to do in a country as awash with weapons as America is (indeed, it happens all the time; we just don't call it terrorism when non-Muslims do it). **The fact that we haven't had hundreds of mass shootings from jihadists, despite our security agencies being largely run by clowns, is strong evidence that there just isn't much threat there.**



Ryan Cooper is a national correspondent at TheWeek.com. His work has appeared in the Washington Monthly, The New Republic, and the Washington Post.

Ilham Tohti and Islamic State: How China Defines Terrorism

By Shannon Tiezzi

Source: <http://thediplomat.com/2014/09/ilham-tohti-and-islamic-state-how-china-defines-terrorism/>

Over at *ChinaFile*, Richard Bernstein and Ely Ratner discuss the possibility of the U.S. and China cooperating to fight terrorism. Bernstein argues that while such cooperation is desirable, in reality the prospects are hindered by Beijing's tendency to label peaceful dissenters as "terrorists." Bernstein welcomes China's efforts to aid in the fight against Islamic State (IS), but also worries that China will take advantage of the situation to justify "repression of peaceful and lawful dissent in Xinjiang." Bernstein concludes that, should China step up its role in global counterterrorism, the world "will not be so much gaining Chinese help in the real anti-terrorism fight as it will be collaborating in China's ongoing violations of the rights of its Uighur citizens."

In a similar vein, Ratner points out that Washington is reluctant to increase anti-terror cooperation with Beijing precisely out of fear that doing so "would help China develop additional capabilities to oppress its own people." Ratner is correct; U.S. government officials often discuss counterterrorism and human rights simultaneously, an indication of their concern over China's approach. This attitude was fully on display at the Strategic and Economic Dialogue this year, where the discussion on counterterrorism included Secretary of State John Kerry emphasizing "the differentiation between terrorism and political activism – or political dissent."

The fate of Uyghur scholar Ilham Tohti (photo) is an example of China's conflation of dissent and terrorism. Tohti was sentenced to life in prison on charges of separatism earlier this week. A *Xinhua* commentary blasted Tohti as "a separatist who incited ethnic hatred." The piece also denounced Western countries for protesting Tohti's sentencing. "For them, anyone, even those like Ilham Tohti who turn to extremism, could be named a freedom fighter as long as he is against the Chinese government," *Xinhua* complained. The piece then explicitly drew a parallel between U.S.-led airstrikes against IS and the sentencing of

Tohti: "China's painstaking efforts to eradicate the three evil forces of terrorism, separatism and religious extremism in Xinjiang should have been viewed as part of the world's anti-terrorism endeavors. Ilham Tohti should have been denounced as a criminal threatening the peace and stability of a country."

Despite this diatribe, the Chinese government's charges against Tohti have little to do with actual terrorism. Based on *Xinhua's* report, Tohti's primary crime was not actively organizing or planning terrorist attacks but running a website that criticized Chinese government policies. Tohti's lawyer, Li Fangping, denied even these charges. "He hoped to unite Uyghur interests and national interests. None of his speech was in support of separatism," Li Fangping told *Reuters*. Human rights organizations agree. "Tohti has consistently, courageously and unambiguously advocated peacefully for greater understanding and dialogue between various communities, and with the state," Sophie Richardson, the Chinese director at Human Rights Watch told *South China Morning Post*. "If this is Beijing's definition of 'separatist' activities, it's hard to see tensions in Xinjiang ... decreasing." Even if we accept at face value the charge that



articles on Tohti's website "incited ethnic hatred," there's a far cry between publishing articles and the violent actions undertaken by IS and other terrorists. Yet the *Xinhua* article ended with a laundry list of terrorist attacks

within China in the past year, drawing a direct line between Tohti and violent terrorist activity. Other state media articles, including the *Xinhua* commentary quoted earlier, draw even more explicit parallels between Tohti's actions and violent extremist groups such as IS.

It's precisely this conflation of dissent and violence under the



catch-all label of extremism, separatism and terrorism that leads to headlines like this one from the *Washington Post*: “China’s war on terror becomes all-out attack on Islam in Xinjiang.” The article points to evidence that Beijing is lumping conservative Islamic practices (such as women wearing veils) together with extremism and terrorism. Chinese intellectual Wang Lixiong summed up his view for the *New York Review of Books*: “They [Chinese authorities] don’t want moderate Uighurs... they wanted to get rid of him [Tohti] and then you can say to the West that there are no moderates and we’re fighting terrorists.” The upshot, in a foreign policy sense, is that Western countries (and particularly the U.S.) are reluctant to cooperate with China on anti-terrorism because China’s definition of terrorism is shockingly broad. It encompasses

not only Islamic State, but Ilham Tohti; not only the knife-wielding assailants at a Kunming railway station but Muslims seeking to hold private religious study sessions. In responding to Tohti’s sentencing, Secretary Kerry emphasized that “peaceful dissent is not a crime.” Kerry concluded, “Differentiating between peaceful dissent and violent extremism is vital to any effective efforts to counter terrorism.”

I’ve written before that U.S. concern over the way China defines terrorism is one of the major factors holding back bilateral cooperation on anti-terrorism. Even as U.S. officials seek greater Chinese cooperation in the campaign against IS, the sentencing of Ilham Tohti reminds us that such anti-terror cooperation will remain limited.

Shannon Tiezzi is an Associate Editor at The Diplomat. Her main focus is on China, and she writes on China’s foreign relations, domestic politics, and economy. Shannon previously served as a research associate at the U.S.-China Policy Foundation, where she hosted the weekly television show China Forum. She received her A.M. from Harvard University and her B.A. from The College of William and Mary. Shannon has also studied at Tsinghua University in Beijing.

FBI Says No One Killed at Sandy Hook

Source: <http://www.infowars.com/fbi-says-no-one-killed-at-sandy-hook/>

Recently released FBI crime statistics curiously appear to show that no murders occurred in Newtown, Connecticut, in 2012, despite reports that numerous schoolchildren and faculty members were slaughtered during a shooting rampage in December of that year.

CRIME in the United States 2012

Criminal Justice Information Services Division | Feedback | Contact Us | Data Quality Guidelines | UCR Home

GIUS Home | Offenses Known to Law Enforcement | Violent Crime | Property Crime | Clearances | Persons Arrested | Police Employee Data | About GIUS

Table 8

COLORADO
Offenses Known to Law Enforcement by City, 2012

Data Declaration | Download Excel | Table 8 State Listing

City	Population	Violent crime	Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter	Forcible rape	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Property crime	Burglary	Larceny-theft	Motor vehicle theft	Arson
Arvada	109,029	158	0	22	29	107	2,605	390	2,014	201	20
Aspen	6,734	12	0	4	0	8	308	23	260	5	2
Ault	1,577	3	0	0	0	3	2	0	1	1	0
Aurora	336,952	1,433	29	179	483	742	10,059	1,791	7,370	898	72

On December 14, 2012, the world watched in horror as the corporate media reported the deaths of 20 students and 6 staff members at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown at the hands of a deranged 20-year-old.

Internet sleuths immediately took to the web to stitch together clues indicating the shooting could be a carefully-scripted false flag event, similar to the 9/11 terror attacks, the central tenet being that the event would be used to galvanize future support for gun control legislation. Two years later, and

scores of politicians and gun control groups have cited the Sandy Hook incident as a pretext to curtail Americans’ Second Amendment rights.



The investigation took an odd turn earlier this year when national school safety consultant Wolfgang Halbig was visited and threatened at his home by homicide detectives after he began reporting on additional inconsistencies in the Sandy Hook narrative, which he believes prove the shooting to be fabricated.

Among 16 questions which Halbig says are key to unlocking the Sandy Hook mystery, Halbig asks, "Why and for what reason would the FBI classify the SHES shooting when they did not classify the Columbine shooting which also was an Active Shooter Mass Casualty Incident (AS/MCI)?"

Additionally, Halbig questioned why no trauma helicopters were ever summoned to the school, and why paramedics and EMTs weren't allowed to enter the building to try to save lives.

In contrast to the Connecticut report, the 2012 FBI crime report for the state of Colorado shows that 29 murders occurred in the town of Aurora that year, a figure which takes into account the number of people who died in the Century Theater during the premiere of Christopher Nolan's *The Dark Knight* film.



The Sandy Hook School Massacre and FBI Data Anomalies

Source: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/the-sandy-hook-school-massacre-and-fbi-data-anomalies/5404658>

Adan Salazar at Infowars recently published an article (read above) asserting that the FBI says no one was killed at Sandy Hook. The article draws on FBI uniform crime report (UCR) data as evidence. Specifically, Salazar indicates that UCR homicide data contains an entry of "0" for the Newtown, Connecticut row.

While there are very important FBI data issues in play regarding the Sandy Hook event, the issue identified by Salazar is a non-starter. This article (written by a criminologist) first explains why the data entry identified by Salazar in no way whatsoever supports the claim that the FBI says no one was killed at Sandy Hook. Then, we pinpoint a legitimate FBI/Sandy Hook related data issue that adds to the host of important questions about the Sandy Hook event.

Salazar may be unaware that the FBI does not itself gather crime-related data. Rather, the FBI obtains its data from participating states, which in turn collect localized data from within their jurisdictions. The FBI's 2012 UCR data contains the Newtown "0" data entry simply because Newtown reported that figure. This raises the question as to why that happened.

The answer is that it has to do with the way the state of



Connecticut accounted for the Newtown event. Connecticut happens to issue its own Uniform Crime Reports, and you can access the 2012 version by clicking [here](#). If you scroll to page 415, you will note that the state accounted for the 27 Newtown/Sandy Hook murder “victims” by including them under the “Agency or Area” heading “State Police Misc.,” which is obviously not Newtown. In fact, if you go to page 245, you will see that, like the FBI UCR, the Connecticut UCR also lists 0 murders for the “Agency or Area” Newtown.

There could conceivably be real issues as to why the Sandy Hook murders weren’t scored in the Newtown “Agency or Area” even if it is true that the Connecticut State Police managed the “investigation.” But the fact remains that the Newtown event was scored under the “State Police Misc.” heading, and since the FBI received the data from Connecticut, it placed a “0” in the Newtown row just as the state of Connecticut did. Thus, the claim that the FBI says nobody was killed at Newtown is unsupported by the FBI’s UCR Newtown “0” data point.

Nonetheless, there does appear to be a different, and potentially critical, issue concerning the Sandy Hook event and FBI data. In a 9/10 USA Today article, we are told: “The records are voluntarily submitted by police agencies, and FBI officials say the Connecticut State Police and Aurora police departments initially provided the information on the year’s two largest killing incidents – only to request that it be deleted.

In Aurora, Sgt. Chris Amsler says his department provides data to the Colorado Bureau of Investigations monthly. The FBI database contains information on 18 other homicides in Aurora in 2012.

“We checked our records and found that all data related to the theater shooting was submitted,” he said, adding that investigators were still trying to figure out why the incident was later deleted from FBI records. Connecticut’s homicide count is correct, but the FBI’s detailed supplementary material includes only the shooting of Adam Lanza’s mother at her home in December 2012, just before Lanza went to the elementary school. Lt. Paul Vance says his department submitted a six-page report on the Newtown school victims to the FBI but later identified a mistake. Updated data was provided too

late to be reflected in the database, Vance says, but the information should be added soon.”

The missing Aurora data is disturbing, and could conceivably connect to the Sandy Hook event at some point, but we’ll have to bypass that possibility here in order to focus on the issue at hand.

So moving along, it is utterly bizarre—for reasons that will become clear shortly—that, according to FBI officials, the Connecticut State Police “initially provided the information...only to request that it be deleted.” We should couple this information with Lt. Paul Vance’s claim that “his department submitted a six-page report on the Newtown school victims to the FBI but later identified a mistake” and his claims that “[u]pdated data was provided too late to be reflected in the database, Vance says, but the information should be added soon.”

What we have here, ladies and gentlemen, makes no sense at all. Really: it makes no sense at all. To see this, it might help to know (in case you don’t already) that the “supplementary material” referred to in the above quote is actually “Supplementary Homicide Report” (SHR) data. That data is simply a spreadsheet that contains very simple information reported to the FBI by states and their agencies. Thus, viewing the SHR data allows one to determine, for example, what the race of the offender was, how old the offender was, the number of victims, the ages of the victims, and other data of more or less equal simplicity. SHR data does not involve very complex forensic issues, witness narratives, and so forth. None of these types of things are included in the SHR. In fact, the vast majority of data points included in the SHR are so simple that they can be represented by a just a single letter or number.

Therefore, when the FBI says it deleted Sandy Hook SHR data upon having been requested to do so by the state of Connecticut on the alleged grounds that Vance’s department made a “mistake”, we must ask:

what sort of “mistake” (and please note that the singular was used by Vance, although given the simplicity of SHR data that doesn’t matter terribly much) could possibly have been made that would justify deleting every single, simple, data point other than those pertaining to the Nancy Lanza killing?



Following from (1), why wouldn't Vance have simply requested that the FBI delete only the data point he thought was inaccurate (remember he says "mistake", not "mistakes.") After all, he allowed the FBI to keep the Nancy Lanza related data points. And even if Vance made more than one mistake, again, why not simply tell the FBI to keep the correct data points? Remember that what we are talking about here is data like the age of victims. So if Vance's "mistake" was, for example, that someone in his department indicated that a victim was 7 when they were in fact 6, it could have been fixed forthwith without deleting the rest of the victim ages, victim gender, and all of the rest of the very simple data Vance says he gave the FBI in the first place. Notice also that these observations totally scotch the preposterous "it was too late to make the corrections" assertion, completely aside from the fact that if it was too late before to fix the problem, why isn't it too late now? Could Vance be banking on an implicit lie to the effect that SHR data is contextual and sophisticated, so that just one mistake could in principle taint the

entirety of the non-Nancy Lanza data if it is not corrected, thereby requiring deletion of all of the data until corrections are made? And what's taking so long to make what are necessarily very simple—given the very nature of the SHR data—corrections?

Remember too that researchers are analyzing SHR data, and have not been told by the FBI in its SHR material that the non-Nancy Lanza Newtown data are missing—and so the scientific enterprise has been needlessly compromised.

It's too bad for Vance that the SHR data is not sophisticated; it's very simple. Therefore, there is no legitimate excuse for his request that the entirety of the data (other than the Nancy Lanza data) be deleted. Since per the FBI's statements and dataset the data were nonetheless deleted, we have one more truly compelling set of reasons to consider the Sandy Hook event fraudulent.

As for the USA Today "journalist", I will be charitable and suppose that these issues simply never occurred to her.

Dr. Jason Kissner is Associate Professor of Criminology at California State University. Dr. Kissner's research on gangs and self-control has appeared in academic journals. His current empirical research interests include active shootings.

Austria's "Russian" Solution to Islamic Terrorism

Source: <http://www.frontpagemag.com/2014/dgreenfield/austrias-russian-solution-to-islamic-terrorism/>



It might seem strange that Austria is taking the lead in the European domestic response to ISIS, but it shouldn't be. Thanks to Chancellor Kreisky's left-wing radicalism and ties to the USSR, Vienna became a base for Muslim terrorists in Europe.

But the terrorists are a lot more disturbing these days than just the PLO. Vienna is

now more of a Jihadist hub

than ever.

The report stated that Austria is used as a place for recruiting and organising

European jihadists who plan to travel through the Western Balkans to Syria.

As many as 130 people from Austria are believed to be fighting as jihadists abroad. More than half of Austria's jihadists originally come from the Caucasus region and have a valid residence permit in Austria. The rest are mainly Bosnian and Turkish-born.

John R. Schindler, a professor of national security affairs at the US Naval War College, writes in a recent blog post that "for years, Vienna has served as the de facto base for Islamist extremists from Southeastern Europe, a place to recruit, raise and hide funds, and radicalize, thanks to Austria's permissive laws and weak enforcement mechanisms. It's an



exceptional terrorist or Salafi radical in Bosnia who has not spent some time in Austria.”

Now Austria is suddenly pushing some of the hardest laws in Europe in response to ISIS.

It includes: a ban on the groups’ symbols; revoking Austrian citizenship of extremist fighters who are double citizens; and stricter rules for minors who want to travel outside the European Union.

For Americans, two of these might as well be imaginary, but it’s the Koran retooling that is getting attention.

Austria’s foreign minister has proposed an idea he believes will discourage Muslims from joining the Islamic State group: create a single, standardized translation of the Koran to discourage misinterpretation of the Muslim holy book.

Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz said Saturday that the move will prevent extremists from misusing the Koran, the German news agency DPA reported, suggesting bad translations are behind radicalism.

“There are countless translations, countless interpretations,” Kurz said. “On the other hand it is also in the interest of the community of faith that not many words are incorrectly interpreted and reproduced.”

Obviously it’s a ridiculous proposal since the idea that the Austrian government’s official

Koran will be able to compete with the subsidized Saudi copies routed through its network of mosques and agencies is unrealistic.

Furthermore there’s only so much you can do with the translation. Even assuming that your targets don’t read Arabic, changing the meaning of some words won’t fix this. The Koran’s narrative is military. To fix that you would have to rewrite, rather than retranslate. The USSR adjusted the translations of some books. Other books it had to rewrite because they were too problematic.

And rewriting the Koran would require replacing it with a new Koran. Obviously that won’t happen. Instead a few of the more violent terms will be translated vaguely and the end result will fool no one and only serve as a hook for Salafist recruiters.

But the move itself is interesting. It’s alien to America where there is a separation of church and state, but not to Europe where they continue to be entangled.

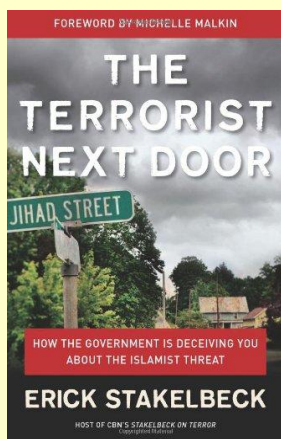
Austria is pursuing the “Russian” solution of creating a government approved Islam. To some extent the UK is struggling to do the same thing. And when Obama and Kerry assert that ISIS isn’t real Islam, they are implicitly doing the same thing.

In essence this means the rise of a government approved and subsidized Islam.

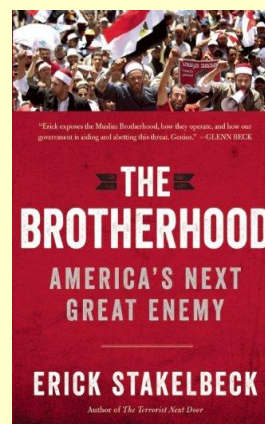
Oklahoma Beheading: An Islamic Terrorist "Chip Away" Attack

By Erick Stakelbeck

Source: <http://blogs.cbn.com/stakelbeckonterror/archive/2014/09/27/oklahoma-beheading-an-islamic-terrorist-chip-away-attack.aspx>



The Oklahoma jihadist beheader's horrific Islamic terrorist attack yesterday on two innocent women is the kind of incident I referred to in Chapter 2 of my first book, "The Terrorist Next Door," as a "Chip Away" attack. That was back in 2011, and unfortunately, I think we are going to see more of this kind of thing on U.S. soil. These sudden, smaller-scale attacks, carried out on a regular basis (think Fort Hood and the Boston bombings, on a regular basis), can "chip away" at a society's stability, psyche and sense of security--but only if we let them. Israel has persevered in the face of this, and we can, too--but first, we have to have the guts to identify the enemy and defeat it. I encourage you to pick up "The Terrorist Next Door" and also my 2013 book, "The Brotherhood," which delves into the ideology that motivates these long wolf jihadists. I consider these two books educational tools for such a



time as this. The politically correct need not apply.

Erick Stakelbeck is CBN News Terrorism Analyst



Kurdish People's Protection Unit
(YPG) – N Syria & Iraq



Handmade tanks & ambulances



Oklahoma Beheader Linked to Al Qaeda Leader Awlaki, Boston Bomber's Mosque

Source: <http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Peace/2014/09/26/OKC-Killer-Linked-Through-Imam-to-Al-Qaeda-Leader-Awlaki>

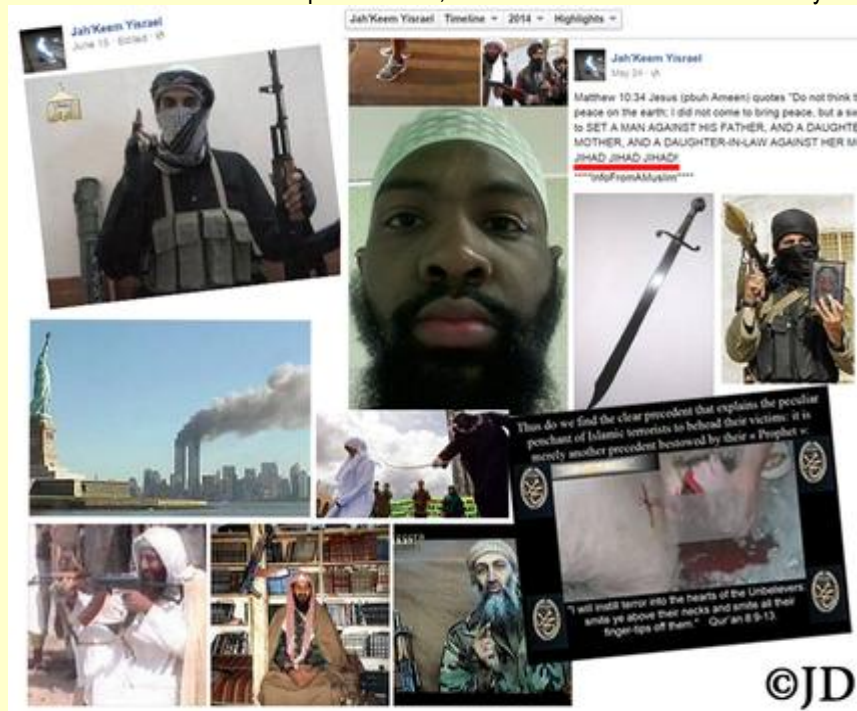
Suhaib Webb, an Imam with ties to former Al Qaeda mastermind Anwar al-Awlaki, had also previously been the leader of the Islamic Society of Greater Oklahoma City, which had been attended by Alton Nolen -- the man who on Thursday beheaded a former coworker after recently converting to Islam, Breitbart News has learned. Webb now serves as Imam of the sister organization of the mosque attended by Boston Marathon bombers Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev.

Imam Suhaib Webb has a history of ties to radicalism. FBI surveillance documents found that he was a known confidant of Al Qaeda mastermind Anwar al-Awlaki. Just two days before the September 11, 2001 attacks on

Nolen took a picture of himself (above)



September 5th, just three weeks before he brutally murdered an innocent woman, standing in front of the gates of the Islamic Society of Greater Oklahoma City.



The caption read: "At The Masjid (Mosque) Today For Jumar 9/5/2014 & Peforming Wudu!!!"

Imam Webb's bio from his new place of employment, the Islamic Society of Boston, states:

While pursuing his bachelors degree Imam Webb studied privately with a renowned Muslim Scholar of Senegalese descent. After intense private training in various Islamic sciences, Imam Webb was hired as the Imam at the Islamic Society of Greater Oklahoma City, where he not only provided Khutbas (Sermons) and religious classes but also counseled families and young people.

The Islamic Society of Boston, which was attended by the Tsarnaev brothers during his

tenure as Imam, has several within their ranks who have been charged with committing acts of Islamic Radicalism. The founder of the Mosque, Abdulrahman Alamoudi, was sentenced to 23 years in prison for his role for financing terror. After the Boston Marathon bombings, Webb had initially been invited to an interfaith memorial at the Holy Cross

America, Webb spoke at a fundraiser with Awlaki with hopes to raise funds for Atlanta-based H. Rap Brown, a man that shot and killed two police officers. The FBI documents also found that "Webb and Awlaki may be associated with the Muslim American Society," which is a group described by the Investigative Project on Terrorism as being "founded as the United States Chapter of the Muslim Brotherhood."

After the Boston Marathon bombings, Webb had initially been invited to an interfaith memorial at the Holy Cross



Cathedral, where president Obama was scheduled to speak. Imam Webb's invitation was then rescinded under mysterious circumstances at the last minute, according to reports.

Writing in the *Jewish Advocate* last year, columnist Charles Jacobs described Imam Webb as someone who “teaches vicious hatred and calls for young Muslims to engage in Jihad against non-Muslims in order to establish a global Islamic state.”

Additionally, a video from October showed Webb at a Council for American Islamic Relations (CAIR) fundraiser calling for an Islamic State. The Islamic organization, a group that originally had secretly called itself the "Palestine Committee of the Muslim Brotherhood," was charged as an unindicted co-conspirator in the largest terrorism financing case in American history, known as the Holy Land Foundation Trial.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: I was about to comment on the way the incident was initially presented when I read this article:

Critics blast authorities for treating beheading as case of workplace violence

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2014/09/27/critics-blast-authorities-for-treating-oklahoma-beheading-as-case-workplace/>

Once more one can notice the same naive attitude when bad things happen. An initial effort to cover things under the shield of "ongoing" investigation; then under the pressure of Internet/people leaks follow in order to prepare populace not to panic and then the truth is popping up and life goes on. Perhaps for such a big nation this might be the right procedure. Especially for central States – although Oklahoma is close to TX [the center of the US world]. People are working hard to earn their living and most often they now only what is fed by mass media – mainly TV. But in the era of Internet of Things nothing can be hide and the universal rule indicating that the "biggest the problem, the biggest the truth" should be the norm not the exception. People do not panic anymore! People should confront the threats and be part of the overall defense plan!

Wary of air strikes, ISIS militants change tactics

Source: <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/perspective/analysis/2014/09/27/Wary-of-air-strikes-ISIS-militants-change-tactics.html>

Militants of Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) militants are changing tactics in the face of U.S. air strikes in northern Iraq, ditching



conspicuous convoys in favor of motorcycles and planting their black flags on civilian homes, tribal sources and eyewitnesses say.

They reported fewer militant checkpoints to weed out “apostates” and less cell phone use since the air strikes intensified and more U.S. allies pledged to join the campaign that began in August, saying the militants had also split up to limit casualties.

A tribal sheikh from a village south of Kirkuk said ISIS elements “abandoned one of their biggest headquarters in the village” when they heard the air strike campaign was likely to target their area.

“They took all their furniture, vehicles and weapons. Then they planted roadside bombs and destroyed the headquarters,” said the tribal sheikh who declined to be named.

“They don’t move in military convoys like before. Instead they use motorcycles, bicycles, and if necessary, they use camouflaged cars,” he said.

The militants have also taken to erecting their notorious black flag on the rooftops of several mostly



empty residential houses and buildings, to create confusion about their actual presence.

Executing people like drinking water

A U.S.-led coalition has started bombing the



Civilian casualties are a major concern as U.S. war planes venture deeper into the Tigris River valley and to Iraq's western desert in the name of breaking ISIS's grip on mostly Sunni parts of Iraq -- nearly one-third of the country. France

militants in Syria as well, fearing the Sunni extremist group could threaten national security from a caliphate they have declared in territory seized there and through the border into Iraq.

Arab allies have joined in and this week Denmark and Britain both pledged fighter jets to Iraq but not Syria.

In another village near Haweeja in northern Iraq, a source said the militants had ditched the use of long convoys of conspicuous vehicles with mounted machine guns and also noted their new preference for motor-bikes.

ISIS fighters, who have controlled much of Syria's eastern oil and agricultural provinces for more than a year, swept through mainly Sunni Muslim regions of north Iraq in mid-June, seizing cities including Mosul and Tikrit and halting less than 100 miles (160 km) from the capital Baghdad.

But their recent moves suggest they are worried about the air strikes, which are backed on the ground by a largely hapless Iraqi army but a more formidable Kurdish peshmerga force.

"They were executing people like drinking water ... Now the air strikes are very active and have decreased the (militants') ability," Sheikh Anwar al-Assy al-Obeidi, the head of his tribe in Kirkuk and across Iraq, told Reuters.



has also taken part in the air campaign. Tribal and local intelligence sources said an air strike on Thursday near Bashir town, 20 km (12 miles) south of Kirkuk, had killed two local senior ISIS leaders while they were receiving a group of militants from Syria and Mosul. Ongoing fighting makes it impossible to verify the reports.



"Wherever they hide, people want to get rid of them because they're afraid their houses will be struck," said Obeidi, who fled to Kurdistan this summer after ISIS blew up his home.

Shutting cellphones, switching cars

The insurgents have gone underground in their main Syrian stronghold since U.S. President Barack Obama authorized U.S. air strikes on the group in Syria - which began earlier this week.

They have disappeared from streets, redeployed weapons and fighters, and cut down their media exposure, residents said.

The air strikes have by no means crippled them. Their fighters edged towards a strategic town on northern Syria's border with Turkey on Friday, battling Kurdish forces, while air strikes hit their oilfields and bases in Syria's east.

In the eastern Iraqi province of Diyala, an eyewitness said the air strikes had forced the militants to cut back the number of checkpoints which inspected identity cards, looking for those they considered "apostates": Shi'ites, policemen, soldiers.

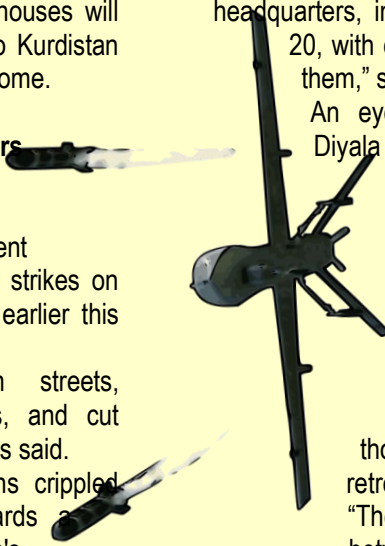
"They have also increased the number of headquarters, instead of two, they now have 20, with only 3-4 people in each one of them," said the eyewitness.

An eyewitness in Jalawla town in Diyala also said the militants had decreased their presence on the frontline, no longer confronting army troops with large numbers.

In Tikrit, police colonel Hassan al-Jabouri said the militants had withdrawn their checkpoints from main thoroughfares in the city, retreating to side streets.

"They have also switched cars between the areas they control and our intelligence indicates that they have all changed their cell phones. These are always shut and the batteries are removed unless they need to use them," Jabouri told Reuters.

In perhaps the most obvious indication the militants are wary of the strikes; they have taken to digging and hiding in trenches -- just big enough for two people -- in residents' backyards.



EDITOR'S COMMENT: Adaptability was always the strong point of terrorists worldwide and the quality that made them always being a step ahead of their opponents. But they have to make up their mind: are they willing to establish a caliphate (cannot do that in small groups) or turn to wide spread terrorist organization (this can be done in small groups). Interesting dilemma but equally deadly no matter what their choice would be.

7 Other Lone Wolf Islamic Attacks Inside the U.S

By Ben Shapiro

Source: <http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Peace/2014/09/28/7-Other-Lone-Wolf-Islamic-Attacks>

September 28 – **Over the weekend, the FBI announced that it would treat Islamist Alton Nolan's alleged beheading of Colleen Hufford, 54, as a case of workplace violence. That despite the fact that Nolan's Facebook page contains a picture of Nolan giving the ISIS salute, multiple pictures of Osama Bin Laden, a screenshot of the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Center, and a quote reading, "I will instill terror into the hearts of the unbelievers: smile ye above their necks and smite all their fingertips off them."**



This, of course, is not the first time the federal government has labeled Islamic terrorism "workplace violence." The Fort Hood shootings by avowed Islamist Nidal Hassan were classified thus by the federal government, as well. In fact, the Obama administration has repeatedly treated "lone wolf"

Islamic terror inside the United States as though it were non-terrorist crime – unlike the Bush administration, which, for example, correctly labeled as terrorism Hesham Mohamed



Hadayet's attack on the El Al counter at Los Angeles International Airport in 2002 and the Beltway snipers' multiple murders in that same year.

The Obama administration takes great pains never to label Islamic terror as such inside the United States; instead, we are told, we should focus disproportionately on the threat of right-wing groups like the Tea Party.

Meanwhile, Islamists inside the United States kill and maim and torture.

Here are seven other recent cases of lone wolf Islamic attacks inside the United States in recent years:

Yusuf Ibrahim. In April, 28-year-old Yusuf Ibrahim was indicted for two 2013 beheadings. He allegedly shot 25-year-old Hanny Tawadros and 27-year-old Amgad Konds, then cut off their heads and hands. The two were Egyptian Coptic Christian expatriates.

Faleh Hassan Almaleki. Almaleki killed his daughter, Noor Almaleki, 20, in a parking lot in Phoenix in 2009 after she became "too Westernized" and refused an arranged marriage. He also used his car to assault the mother of Noor's boyfriend. Ahmed Rehab of the Council on American-Islamic Relations condemned the "domestic violence incident."

Yaser Said. In 2008, Said allegedly murdered his two daughters after they began dating non-Muslims. He allegedly shot daughters Amina, 18, and Sarah, 17, on January 1, 2008 multiple times after luring them back home to visit their grandmother's grave. Said is still at large.

Muzzammil Hassan. In 2009, Hassan cut his wife's head off because she filed for divorce against him. He stabbed his wife, Aasiya, some 40 times and then proceeded to decapitate her. Ironically, Hassan founded Bridge TV in 2004, a station dedicated to fighting "the negative stereotype of Muslims post-9/11."

Mohammed Taheri-azar: In 2006, Taheri-azar drove his car into a crowd at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in an attempt to kill Americans in supposed revenge for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. A letter he left for police read: "I live with the holy Koran as my constitution for right and wrong and definition of injustice... I've read all 114 chapters about 20 times since June of 2003 when I started reading the Koran. The U.S. government is responsible for the deaths and torture of countless followers of Allah, my brothers and sisters. My attack on Americans at UNC-CH March 3, was in retaliation for similar attacks orchestrated by the U.S. government on my

fellow followers of Allah in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia and other Islamic territories."

Naveed Afzal Haq. Haq (photo) attacked the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle in 2006 with a gun, killing a woman and wounding five. According to the Seattle police, Haq said "he wanted the United States to leave Iraq, that his people were being mistreated and that the United States was harming his people. And he pointedly blamed the Jewish people for all of these problems. He stated he didn't care if he lived." Those who worked with Haq said he self-identified as a "Muslim-American... angry at Israel."

Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhamad. He shot and killed an Army soldier at a Little Rock recruiting station in 2010. The feds didn't charge him with terrorism; instead, state authorities charged him with murder. As the *Los Angeles Times* reports, after converting to Islam in Tennessee at age 20, he moved to Yemen, was arrested there, and then came back to the United States to attack the recruiting station. According to police, Mohammed stated he was "mad at the U.S. military because of what they had done to Muslims in the past," and he wanted to "kill as many people in the Army as he could." According to the perpetrator's father, the feds didn't charge Muhammad with terrorism because doing so would have shone a spotlight on their own incompetence: "They should have done their job and this never would have happened. I think that somebody in the federal government and the FBI should be charged with negligence. Negligent homicide."



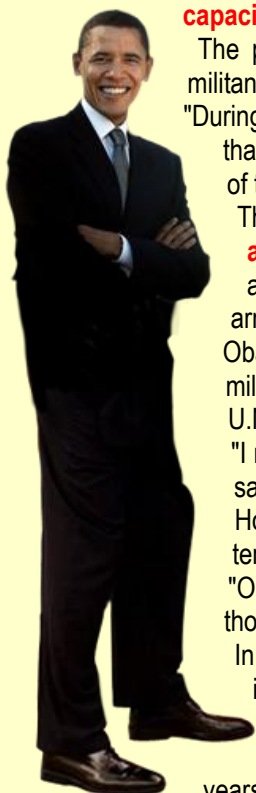
Undoubtedly, there are other cases. And the power of worldwide communication means that terror groups across the Middle East are actively recruiting inside the United States. **What we saw in Oklahoma may be just the beginning – or rather, the continuation – of a trend, especially if the feds refuse to treat Islamic terrorism for what it is.**

Ben Shapiro is Senior Editor-At-Large of Breitbart News and author of the new book, [The People vs. Barack Obama: The Criminal Case Against The Obama Administration](#) (Threshold Editions, June 10, 2014). He is also Editor-in-Chief of [TruthRevolt.org](#).

US 'underestimated' rise of ISIS, Obama says

Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2014/09/28/us-misjudged-iraqi-army-isis-threat-obama-says/>

September 28 – **President Obama acknowledged Sunday that U.S. intelligence officials "underestimated" the threat posed by the Islamic State and overestimated the Iraqi army's capacity to defeat the militant group.**



The president said in a wide-ranging interview on CBS' "60 Minutes" that the Islamic State militants went "underground" after being squashed in Iraq and regrouped amid the Syrian civil war. "During the chaos of the Syrian civil war, where essentially you have huge swaths of the country that are completely ungoverned, they were able to reconstitute themselves and take advantage of that chaos," Obama said.

The president said **his director of national intelligence, James Clapper, has acknowledged that the U.S. "underestimated what had been taking place in Syria."** He also said it was "absolutely true" that the U.S. overestimated the ability and will of the Iraqi army.

Obama also acknowledged that the U.S. is dealing with a conundrum in Syria, as the U.S.-led military campaign against the Islamic State is helping Syrian President Bashar Assad, who the U.N. has accused of war crimes.

"I recognize the contradiction in a contradictory land and a contradictory circumstance," Obama said. "We are not going to stabilize Syria under the rule of Assad."

However, Obama called the threat from the Islamic State, also known as ISIS or ISIL, and other terror groups a more "immediate concern that has to be dealt with."

"On the other hand, in terms of immediate threats to the United States, ISIL, Khorasan Group -- those folks could kill Americans," he said.

In terms of Iraq, Obama said the U.S. left the country after the war with "a democracy that was intact, a military that was well-equipped and the ability then (for Iraqis) to chart their own course."

However, Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki "squandered" that opportunity over roughly five years because he was "much more interested in consolidating his Shia base and very suspicious of the Sunnis and the Kurds, who make up the other two thirds of the country," the president said.

Obama said military force is necessary to shrink the Islamic State's capacity, cut off financing and eliminate the flow of foreign fighters. He said political solutions are also needed that accommodate both Sunnis and Shiites, adding that conflicts between the two sects are the biggest cause of conflict throughout the world.

However, **Obama made clear he has no interest in a major U.S. ground presence beyond the 1,600 American advisers and special operations troops he already has ordered to Iraq.** When asked if the current conflict was not really a war, Obama said there are clear distinctions between this campaign and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We are assisting Iraq in a very real battle that's taking place on their soil, with their troops," the president said. "This is not America against ISIL. This is America leading the international community to assist a country with whom we have a security partnership."

Obama also discussed the midterm elections, U.S. relations with Russia and reviewed his six years as president.

Obama described his relationship with Russian President Vladimir Putin as "blunt," saying Russia's aggression in Ukraine is threatening progress made since the Cold War.



"I've always had a business-like relationship with (Putin)-- and it's blunt and it's firm," Obama said. "And what I've said from the outset is that Russian aggression, violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of a smaller or weaker country, violates international norms and is contrary to all the progress that's been made in creating a peaceful and prosperous Europe after World War II and then after the Cold War period."

Obama also said he believes Democrats can maintain control of the Senate in November.

"I can put my record against any leader around the world in terms of digging ourselves out of a terrible, un-- almost unprecedented financial crisis," Obama said. "Ronald Reagan used to ask-- the question, 'Are you better off than you were four years ago?' In this case, are you better off than you were in six? And the answer is, the country is definitely better off than we were when I came into office..."

EDITOR'S COMMENT: "We" means "all of us" – not just the NSA director and a bunch of close (internal and external) advisors. It means President Obama as well. And it is not the first time that the "team" failed and there is no use to repeat again and again the name of the countries and the reasoning behind failure. Of course there is always the alternative that failure was not a failure but a more complex plan the we common people will read about in 50 yrs. But what comes to my mind is this: despite the reports, analyses, estimations, intel, technology and all does the President HIMSELF has an estimate of his own? And that estimate might be different from all his advisors and experts? Or just he follows what was said or written in meetings and personal communications? The Commander of a military organization has J-1 to J-8 officers as consultants but has also his personal view on missions and possible unfavorable situations that might emerge. Is President following a similar procedure or is he just a figure following the way of things and occasionally says "sorry we underestimate this or that situation?" This is not a question on a specific person but a universal one. Unfortunately, "those who knows do not sign; and those who sign, do not now"! *C'est la vie* on both sides of the ocean...

White Widow terror suspect 'has new face': Hunt said to have gone cold because she has had plastic surgery to evade capture

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2725385/White-Widow-terror-suspect-new-face-Hunt-said-gone-cold-plastic-surgery-evade-capture.html>



The hunt for one of the world's most wanted terrorism suspects known as 'The White Widow' has gone cold after it emerged she has undergone plastic surgery to evade capture. Kenyan detectives admitted yesterday they were struggling to find fugitive Samantha Lewthwaite - but revealed she faces life imprisonment in the country when eventually caught.

The 30-year-old Muslim convert from Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire has spent the past two and a half years on the run and has been repeatedly linked to terrorist plots in East Africa.

The mother-of-four - who is the widow of one of the 7/7 suicide bombers - is charged with plotting



a bombing campaign across Kenya at Christmas in 2011.

The Kenyan investigation team chasing Lewthwaite were summoned to a court in Mombasa yesterday to explain why she had not been caught since Interpol issued an international Red Notice arrest warrant on September 25 last year.

In a statement, Police chief inspector Abednego Kilonzo said she had constantly changed her appearance, name and location while on the run.

In answer to a question in court, he confirmed they believed she had undergone plastic surgery. He said: 'She keeps on changing her face all the time'. He added: 'She is a person with multiple identification. She keeps on moving from one place to the other. She makes many faces and that is why it is difficult to arrest her.'

Mr Kilonzo also produced the Red Notice, which showed that Lewthwaite was faced extradition to Kenya from whichever country she was arrested in.

The notice read: 'If found guilty of the offence, the maximum penalty possible of the offence is life imprisonment.'

Lewthwaite, who converted to Islam at the age of 17, has been identified as a main recruiter

for Al Qaeda in East Africa and is an official spokesman for terror group Al Shabaab.

The group admitted to a string of attacks in Kenya including last September's assault on Nairobi's Westgate shopping mall last year that claimed at least 67 lives.

She is wanted in Kenya on charges of being in possession of explosives and conspiracy to commit a felony dating back to December 2011.

After giving Kenyan police the slip in Mombasa in 2011, she has been on the run ever since, reportedly using a false South African passport and alias.

Lewthwaite is the widow of Jermaine Lindsay, one of four Islamist suicide bombers who blew himself up along with 26 passengers on a Tube train near King's Cross Station in London in 2005.

Following the tragedy, she portrayed herself as another victim of the tragedy and called it 'abhorrent'.

Kenyan Police have previously revealed Lewthwaite, also financed Woolwich murderer Michael Adebolajo's trip to East Africa for terror training.

She has even written poetry praising Osama bin Laden, according to computer files seized by police from her previous home in Mombasa.

UPDATE: "White Widow" now trains ISIS suicide bombers in Syria and is involved in the IS propaganda business.

Ten years later: Who won the Iraq War – the US or China?

By Mordechai Chaziza

Source: http://www.gloria-center.org/2014/09/ten-years-later-who-won-the-iraq-war-the-us-or-china/?utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=MERIA%20Journal%20Vol.%2018,%20No.%203%20%28Fall%202014%29

Many news sources have announced that the answer to the question of who won the Iraq war is simple: the People's Republic of China. Was China the real winner? If so, in what ways? This study analyzes the question of who won the Iraq War in broader terms, both in retrospect and looking forward. It separates myth from reality and takes a long, hard look at the war's impact, both short- and long-term, on the economic and strategic interests of China and the U.S.

Introduction

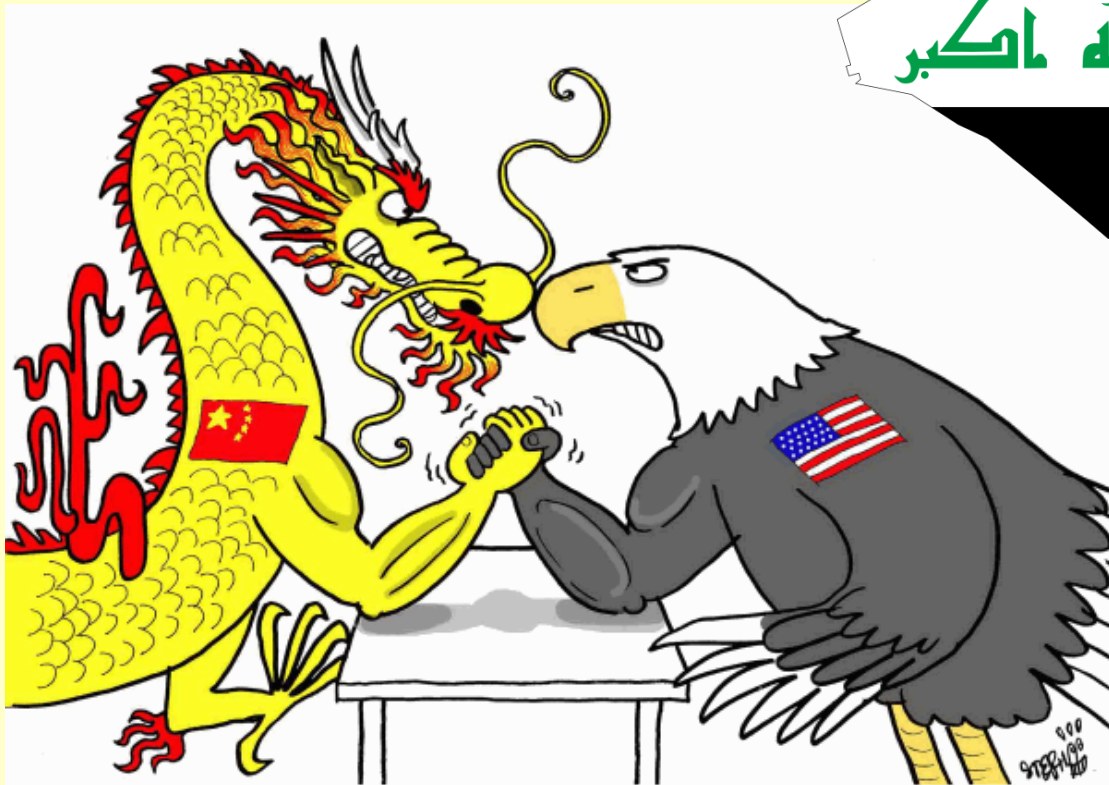
Ten years after the U.S invasion and occupation of Iraq ended, more and more journalists, academics, and policy makers contend that Washington liberated the Iraqi people at heavy human and economic cost to itself, while China ended up the biggest economic beneficiary: Chinese energy firms will become the main customer for Iraqi oil in the foreseeable future. This complaint reflects the evolution of the new current situation in Iraq, where the Chinese presence has been increasing steadily, while U.S. companies have withdrawn from doing business with the country. As Michael Makovsky, a former Defense Department official in the Bush



administration, said “We lost out. The Chinese had nothing to do with the war, but from an economic standpoint, they are benefiting from it.”[1]

The U.S. invasion of Iraq and its aftermath have arguably been the most pivotal events in the Middle East region since the end of the Cold War.[2] The Iraq War had an appreciable impact on Iraq’s relationships with both the U.S. and China. Both countries have rapidly expanded bilateral trade with Iraq, with an emphasis on energy deals. Yet, the war has made it more difficult and risky for Chinese and U.S. companies to conduct investment and business activities in Iraq. Therefore, we must review both winners and losers as well as the consequences of the war for the short and long term.

The first section of this study will analyze the economic benefits and strategic advantages and challenges and losses to China resulting from the Iraq War in the short and long term. The second section will analyze the economic benefits, strategic advantages, and challenges and losses to the U.S. from the Iraq War



in the short and long term. The third section will discuss the findings and conclusions.

China and the Iraq War – Economic benefits and strategic advantages

China’s Middle East foreign policy in the Post-Cold War Period reflected an intensification of Beijing’s drive for economic modernization. China focused almost exclusively on pursuing its own economic interests, primarily driven by the search for energy security and the desire to increase its overseas markets and investment opportunities. Since that period, Beijing has worked to maintain stability in the Middle East for the purpose of securing its energy and economic interests there. This policy, however, is at least partially constrained by China’s need to consider U.S. interests. Beijing must find a way to balance its foreign policy and economic interests with U.S. policy and interests in the region.[3]

There are a number of ways to evaluate the benefits and advantages of the Iraq War on Chinese strategic and economic interests in the Middle East. The Iraq War had an appreciable impact on Beijing’s strategic interests in the region, but more importantly, on economic interests and energy security.

Strategically, the Iraq War gave Beijing diplomatic “breathing room” to expand its sphere of influence in East Asia and the Middle East. The Iraq War had major effects on the China’s strategic perspective and was a positive development for its rising power status.[4] First, the U.S. occupation of Iraq diverted U.S. power, attention, and resources which otherwise



would have been used to contain the rise of China by creating strategic regional alliances against it, establishing military bases in the region, and generally increasing its presence in Asia. Second, the cost of the war drove the U.S. into further financial distress, especially relative to China. Third, the war created tension between Washington and its traditional diplomatic and security alliances around the world.[5] Moreover, the war damaged the U.S.'s image and reputation in the region and prevented it from implementing other policies. For example, Saudi Arabia was disappointed by the U.S. failure to take action against the Assad regime.[6] Finally, the war stretched the U.S. military's resources very thin and prevented further troop deployments in the region and elsewhere in the world, particularly in regions where such deployment might have encroached on China's sphere of influence and security.[7]

The Iraq War also offered China strategic benefits, albeit less tangible, at the expense of the U.S. Global criticism of the U.S. occupation seemingly confirmed the prudence of China's non-interference doctrine. For China, the U.S. failure in Iraq sent a warning signal to its political leadership against becoming involved in the internal politics of other countries.[8] Instead, China offered the new Iraqi administration an attractive alternative to U.S. occupation, namely, economic engagement and non-involvement in their internal politics. As a result, Beijing quickly rehabilitated its political relationship with the new government and was able to expand its "soft power" at Washington's expense.

The impact and benefits of the Iraq War on the Chinese economy have shifted significantly over time. Although in the beginning it brought significant economic losses to Chinese companies and their investments, post-Saddam Iraq is one of the few countries in the world that can be relied on to maintain its economic growth. Thus, U.S. withdrawal from the country has provided enormous business opportunities for Chinese companies to expand their investments. Chinese firms have been investing in Iraq in construction, government services, and even tourism.[9]

In February 2010, China cancelled 80 percent of Iraq's \$8.5 billion debt, a move intended to further Chinese business interests in the country. This waiver followed a two-year period (2009-2010) during which China and Iraq signed trade deals worth approximately \$3.8 billion.[10] In 2012, the trade volume between China and Iraq soared nearly 34-fold to \$17.5 billion.[11] Therefore, while a stable Iraq is good news for the country and the region, above all, it is good for China's economic modernization. Additionally, since China is seeking to expand its defense industry, it is reasonable to assume that at some point Iraq will turn to it for military hardware, which would in turn create incentives for greater economic cooperation between the countries and further entrench China's presence in Iraq.[12]

China has emerged as one of the biggest energy beneficiaries of the Iraq War, snagging lucrative deals.[13] Western energy firms eventually lost interest in Iraq, as demonstrated in Iraq's 2012 oil auctions, in which China snapped up three contracts, shrugging off the security risks and Iraq's political instability for the promise of oil. Iraq has become an obvious source for China's quest for future energy security. While Chinese oil dealings and investments with countries in the broader Middle East, like Iran and Sudan, receive global attention, its budding relationship with Iraq may turn out to be the most important in the region.[14]

According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), Iraq has the potential to exceed 6.1 mb/d (million barrels per day) by 2020 and is expected to increase to more than 8.3 mb/d by 2035 and become the key supplier to fast-growing Asian markets including China. Iraq possesses the world's second-largest proven oil reserves, currently estimated at 112.5 billion barrels, about 11 percent of the world total, and its gas fields are immense as well.[15] Additionally, Iraqi oil is of high quality and very inexpensive to produce, making it one of the world's most profitable oil sources. Therefore, Chinese oil companies hope to gain production rights over these rich fields of Iraqi oil, worth hundreds of billions of dollars. According to IEA, China is poised to become the main customer for Iraqi oil by the 2030s, and half of Iraqi oil production will go to China by that time.[16]

Beijing already buys nearly half of all Iraqi oil produced, close to 1.5 mb/d and is angling for an even bigger share, bidding for a stake now owned by Exxon Mobil in one of Iraq's largest oil fields.[17] The volume of Iraqi oil imported by China is already close to its former import levels from Iran, and this is likely to rise to as much as 2 mb/d by 2020 if Iraqi production keeps increasing,[18] although still less than the potential predicted for Iraqi oil output.

Some experts have said that Chinese oil dealings and investments with Iraq's oil industry has created a new "Silk Road" of the global oil trade between Baghdad and Beijing (B&B). This B&B oil link would not only be the key to Chinese energy security but could also force Beijing's greater political and military involvement within Iraq and the broader Middle



East.[19] Additionally, Iraqi oil reserves now appear to be the only large-scale source of Chinese energy security outside of North America. As an oil consumer with stagnant domestic production and rising import needs, China considers Iraq extremely important for its energy security and economic growth.[20]

Relations between Iraq and China will likely continue to intensify in the near future. The Iraq War had an appreciable impact on China's strategic interests, mainly in terms of economic interests and energy security. If the U.S. goal in the Iraq War was to take control of the vast oil reserves of Iraq, as many critics have asserted, then China seems as though it has come away with the lion's share of that oil and has thus emerged as the big winner in the war. Yet Chinese strategic achievements in the region are mainly short-term. As the next section will show, the Iraq War also held many losses and complex challenges for Chinese objectives and interests in the Middle East.

Challenges and losses for China

The Iraq War has been a mixed blessing for China's rising power and sphere of influence in the world. On the one hand, it gave Beijing short-term economic and strategic achievements. On the other hand, it had devastating strategic and economic consequences in the long term, raising the question of whether China truly is truly the greatest beneficiary of the Iraq War.

Strategically, the occupation of Iraq presented an opportunity for China to avoid open confrontation with the U.S. while consolidating its national power and economic development. Especially after the September 11th terrorist attacks, U.S. strategic focus shifted away from China to the war on terrorism, leaving China unconcerned about any major potential confrontations with Washington.[21]

However, the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq led to a strategic conceptual change. Washington planned to draw back its troops from Afghanistan and refocus on Asia, anticipating an era of renewed tension with China. The Obama administration pivoted towards Asia and planned to establish a permanent military presence in Australia, in part to counterbalance growing Chinese power.[22] As President Obama said, "We are here to stay. This is a region of huge strategic importance to us." [23]

The focus on China instead of Iraq as a strategic threat and the new U.S. strategy of containment in Asia would have many partners in the region. Evidence of this can be seen in Washington's regional initiatives: among other actions, the U.S. strengthened its security ties with Asian allies such as Japan, the Philippines, and South Korea, extended diplomatic relations with developing powers such as Vietnam and Indonesia, and increased its involvement with ASEAN institutions. Since 2011, China has found itself far more isolated regionally than it ever had been. As a result, Chinese leaders are feeling isolated, criticized, encircled, and increasingly like a target of U.S. maneuvers.[24] All these factors influence the way Chinese strategists think about their country's security and relations with Washington and U.S. allies in the region, like Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines. For instance, in 2010, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton declared that freedom of navigation in the South China Sea was a U.S. "national interest." China viewed it as an outrageous provocation.[25]

Many Chinese analysts believe that U.S. predominance and military power after the Iraq War has gone into an inexorable decline. Nevertheless, Washington will remain the world's most fearsome military power for a very long time. If Beijing behaves as though the U.S. is weak and seeks to push back against its displays of power in Asia, the relationship between the nations could slide into competition and confrontation and bring about a Cold War style or rivalry for influence in the region. Already, China's tough new attitude in Southeast Asia is having an effect.[26] The Obama administration's maneuverings there, aimed at displacing China and being a counterweight to its growing influence, serve neither China's interests and nor those of its neighboring countries.[27]

Much attention has been focused lately on the rapid expansion of bilateral trade between Beijing and Baghdad, driven by lucrative oil contracts. China has powerful incentives to seek steady long-term supplies of Iraqi oil as part of its energy security. According to the BP Statistical Review of World Energy 2013, Iraq is the world's third-largest oil exporter and has the resources and plans to rapidly increase its oil and natural gas production.[28]

For China, however, the rapid expansion of imports of Iraqi crude oil carries risks and security problems. Deteriorating security, sectarian tensions, endemic corruption, and lack of infrastructure could hurt Iraq's stability, which is necessary for increasing its oil production. These issues also have the potential to threaten its imports and damage profits to Iraqi oil companies. Any one of these factors may force Beijing to look for



alternative suppliers for its energy security. The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) expects the political situation in Iraq to remain unstable. Political divisions within the country, combined with a weak national government and high unemployment, make Iraq one of the most unstable countries in the Middle East. The country remains deeply scarred by the brutal civil war (2006-08) that has poisoned relations between Iraq's religious communities for generations to come.[29]

Furthermore, the Global Risk Insight (GRI) report in 2013 argued that while the economic indicators surrounding Iraq's oil growth seem quite promising, Iraq's progress towards becoming an economic power in the region is hindered by its polarizing politics which are dependent on vestigial policies.[30] Iraq cannot grow economically if it remains politically unstable. The lack of political consensus within Iraq is intertwined with sectarian, ethnic, and even tribal tensions, impacting the economy severely.[31] Moreover, the Syrian conflict has increased the danger of a sectarian war in Iraq and an unstable political environment.[32] Thus, the new unstable political and security situation in Iraq following the U.S. withdrawal does not necessarily contribute to long-term Chinese economic interests in Iraq.

Political tensions between and within Iraq's ethnic and sectarian groups intensified following the U.S. withdrawal, and by 2013, violence had reached a level unseen in many years.[33] Although the Iraq war troop surge in 2007 did improve the security situation enough to allow Washington to pull out of the country, it failed to solve sectarian violence or to create a stable political environment. In this context, most Western oil companies have reduced their activity in Iraq while focusing on other areas in the region, including the autonomous Kurdistan to the north. Beyond the sectarian war, other factors, such as rampant corruption, led to the Western companies' assessment that any project initiated now would be unprofitable.[34]

As a result of this instability, beginning in 2012, Western oil companies began to lose interest in Iraq's oil sector. This has been largely due to growing disenchantment with the Shiite-dominated Baghdad government of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, its bloated, corrupt bureaucracy, and the U.S.'s own energy boom that has lessened its dependence on Middle Eastern oil.[35] For instance, the Iraqi government told ExxonMobil that it must choose between working in the Kurdistan region or working in southern Iraq.[36] So ExxonMobil chose to withdraw from its planned \$50 billion project to develop West Qurna-1 in southern Iraq.[37] Analysts believe that despite its vast potential, West Qurna will not be developed in the near or mid-term because of declining security. Clearly, ExxonMobil sees a much brighter future in Kurdistan because of its stability and friendlier government.[38]

When ExxonMobil decided to give up its stake in developing West Qurna-1 in southern Iraq, it left behind an important business opportunity for Chinese oil companies. Since 2012, China National Petroleum Corp (CNPC) has emerged as the frontrunner to take over Iraq's West Qurna-1 oilfield, a move that would diminish Western oil influence in Iraq a decade after the U.S.-led invasion. By taking on West Qurna-1, Chinese companies would ultimately dominate Iraq's oil fields with roughly 32 percent of the reserves found in service contracts awarded to foreign companies, up from the current 21 percent now.[39] China, however, cannot ignore the geopolitical risks given the ongoing instability in Iraq. Conflict between the Iraqi central government and the Kurds will influence the development of oil projects. Despite its traditional policy of non-involvement, Beijing will face increasing pressure to become involved in the area's treacherous political and security situation.

Chinese oil companies are generally far less risk-averse than Western oil companies. Therefore, they are seeking to fill the vacuum being left by the West's departure. Additionally, Chinese oil companies are prepared to accept tougher terms and lower profits than Western oil majors and even Russian firms.[40] Therefore, Beijing appears as if it is coming away with the lion's share of the Iraqi oil, and thus emerging as the big winner in the war, but this is true only in the short term. Although Chinese presence in Iraq has been strongly increasing while Western companies have been retreating from doing business with the country, according to IEA, in the long run Iraq will need a cumulative energy investment of over \$530 billion.[41] It will be a huge, costly, and long-term project for Chinese oil companies to ramp up to full oil production in a country so divided and unstable. It takes \$30 to \$40 billion in annual investment to rehabilitate active wells and to develop new fields in Iraq's energy sector, and by stepping in to fill the U.S. void, China seems to have volunteered to foot the bill.

[42]

The Iraq War contained strategic losses and complex economic challenges for China's future. In the long term the Iraq War will have serious implications for China's strategic position in Asia, its energy security, and its economic growth. Those who now criticize the



Iraq War because China is seen as having “won” a larger share of Iraq’s oil than the U.S. are equally misguided and do not see the big picture. Even if the Iraq War had never taken place, China’s trade and energy relations with Iraq would have nevertheless expanded rapidly. This is a natural result of Chinese rapid economic development and its need for energy security. Chinese trade with other countries in the Middle East, including post-Saddam Iraq, has also grown rapidly. Beijing can by no means be called a “victor” of the Iraq War. In fact, the war has made it more difficult, costly and risky for Chinese oil companies to invest and conduct business in Iraq’s energy market.

US and the Iraq War – Objectives and consequences for the U.S.

For many decades, Washington has defined its threefold national security interests in the Middle East as a) ensuring access to the region’s oil, b) containing any aspiring regional hegemonic powers, and c) limiting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.[43] The U.S. has tried to achieve this complex set of goals primarily through a network of informal security alliances, especially with Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. Washington has also attempted to broker peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians, partly because a resolution of the Israel-Arab conflict would reduce the appeal of anti-Americanism and contain the radical forces in the region.[44]

As of 2010, the U.S. began transitioning its focus away from the Middle East and towards the Asia-Pacific region. (This may change as IS intensifies its ominous presence in the area). If the trend continues over the next years, this will substantially alter the course of U.S. foreign policy and interests in the Middle East. This new policy was designed under the assumption that U.S. interventions in other regions, like the Middle East, will be reduced. The conflicts in the Middle East, primarily Iraq and Afghanistan, have been decreasing, allowing Washington to focus its attention and resources in the Asia-Pacific region. Moreover, this new course represents an acknowledgement that the Asia-Pacific region has become a major driver of global politics and economic and strategic changes, as well as a potential challenge to U.S. foreign policy and interests.[45]

Although the IEA projects that the U.S. will overtake Saudi Arabia as the world’s biggest oil producer by 2020, Washington must remain engaged in the Middle East if it wants to avoid price volatility and keep energy markets stable.[46] At present, the U.S. still imports its crude oil and related products from the Middle East. Thus, for the foreseeable future, Washington will continue to be engaged in the region, to preserve not only the stability of global energy markets but also its energy security.[47]

For the time being, U.S. strategy and objectives in the Middle East include five principal national security interests in the region. First, deterring, containing, and defending against regional threats, especially limiting and channeling Iran’s nuclear ambitions. Second, supporting new and old Arab regimes in order to fight terrorism, stabilize oil prices, and to advance democracy and human rights in the region. Third, mounting counterterrorism efforts to disrupt, dismantle, and defeat al Qaeda; this remains an important objective, though it has been retrenched in both scope and magnitude. Fourth, ensuring Israeli security and ensuring progress toward Arab-Israeli peace as part of its support for Israel’s security and survival. And finally, securing the oil resources in the Gulf to ensure the overall accessibility and stability of world energy supplies.[48]

After ten years, it is clear that the Iraq War had an appreciable impact on U.S. strategy and economic power. Although the war quickly achieved its primary objective of removing the regime of Saddam Hussein and with him, the specter of a nuclear-armed Iraq, its justification was highly questionable. Washington did not find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq or links to the extremist group Al-Qaeda.[49] Therefore, the U.S. failure in Iraq is both resonant and dissonant; resonant because of the failure to achieve the general objectives of the war and dissonant because of its results, e. g. China’s success in Iraq and the failed attempt at the U.S. rehabilitation of Iraq. As Stephen Walt states simply, “The first and most important lesson of Iraq War is that we [the U.S.] didn’t win in any meaningful sense of that term”.^[50]

The war has had far-reaching economic consequences. Occupying Iraq seriously weakened the U.S. economy, and according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), China’s economy will replace the U.S. economy as the world’s largest by 2016.[51] The cost of the Iraq War to Washington has been estimated at \$3 trillion, a painful blow to the U.S. economy. [52] The Iraq War was not only the second longest war in U.S. history, (after the war in Vietnam); it is also the second most costly—surpassed only by World War



II. According to the U.S. Department of Defense, the Iraq War led to the death of almost 4,500 U.S. soldiers, with another 30,000 injured.[53]

The Iraq War also impacted global oil prices and U.S. oil imports. On the eve of the invasion of Iraq, the price of oil was less than \$25 a barrel, and futures markets expected it to remain around that level. During the Iraq War, oil prices reached over \$140 a barrel by 2008.[54] Experts believe that the war and its impact on the Middle East were major factors in this meteoric rise. Not only was Iraqi production interrupted, but the instability the war brought to the region dampened regional investment. The higher energy costs that resulted had a significant impact on the overall costs of U.S. imports and the size of its trade deficit.[55]

There is no dispute that the Iraq War, like the Afghanistan War, added substantially to U.S. federal debt. In a move unprecedented in U.S. history, Washington cut taxes at the very same time it went to war and thus financed the Iraq war entirely on borrowed funds. U.S. debt soared from \$6.4 trillion in March 2003 to \$10 trillion in 2008.[56] Experts suggested that at least a quarter of that increase was directly attributable to the Iraq War. This amount does not include future payments for health and disability costs to U.S. war veterans, anticipated to total an additional half-trillion dollars.[57] The experts concluded that Washington did not have a spending problem; it had a *military* spending problem. The current deficits are a result of the major military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan which have increased overspending in the U.S. budget. For instance, since 2001, the base defense budget has soared from \$287 billion to \$530 billion, not including the primary costs of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars.[58]

The global financial crisis of 2008, which still reverberates today, can be attributed directly, at least in part, to the Iraq War. The Iraq War and the global financial crisis harmed the image of the U.S. both as a hegemony and an economic influence in the world. Although the Iraq War damaged the image of the U.S. as the predominant international power, the global financial crisis proved that it was still capable of impacting the world economy. Many countries, like China, attributed the crisis to the drawbacks of the U.S.-dominated international financial system, and called for the establishment of a new and more stable international financial order that would be fair, equitable and inclusive.[59]

The Iraq War also made it more difficult for the U.S. government to respond effectively to developing economic problems not only within its own borders but also internationally, and contributed to the severity of the global financial crisis.[60] Washington had far less room to maneuver in the global financial crisis than it otherwise would have had. More specifically, the oil price rise and trade deficit grew because the U.S. occupation of Iraq hampered its own ability to respond to the recession. As of late 2014, the Iraq War has cost U.S. taxpayers \$3 trillion and raised oil prices by at least \$5-\$10 (but more likely by \$35) per barrel. Linda J. Blimes of the Harvard Kennedy School, a leading national expert on defense costs, states, "The Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, taken together, will be the most expensive wars in U.S. history, totaling somewhere between \$4 – \$6 trillion".[61] The price tag of the Iraq War will haunt U.S. citizens for decades to come.

As mentioned above, while China suffered moderately from the Iraq War, it has gained remarkably at U.S. expense. Trade between Iraq and China doubled almost 34 times, and in 2012 the volume of bilateral trade soared to \$17.5 billion, compared to \$517 million in 2002. Meanwhile, the volume of bilateral trade between Iraq and the U.S. increased only 5.6 times. In 2012, bilateral trade between Iraq and the U.S. rose to \$21.6 billion compared to \$ 3.8 billion in 2002.[62] According to the UN Comtrade database, in 2011 Beijing was both the second-largest purchaser of Iraqi exports, at \$12.6 billion, (after the U.S., at \$ 19.6 billion) and the second-largest supplier of imports, at \$4.9 billion.[63]

Although Washington is still Iraq's largest trade partner, current trends suggest that China will soon overtake Washington to become Baghdad's top trade partner.[64] Since 2012, the U.S. has also been steadily losing its edge over Chinese oil companies, which are beginning to take the lead in imports of Iraqi oil, a trend expected to gain momentum in the coming years. In 2012, U.S. imports from Iraq of crude oil were lower in volume than before the invasion.[65] While in 2002 the U.S. imported 485 thousand barrels of crude oil per day (kbpd) from Iraq and the figure from China was almost zero, by 2012, the U.S. imported only 473 kbpd of crude oil, while China's total reached about 315 kbpd.

LONG-TERM STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The Iraq War has several long-term strategic implications for U.S. foreign policy and objectives in the Middle East.



Access to energy sources

Washington's basic objective since the late 1940s and early 1950s has been to preserve the flow of energy resources and commerce, which is vital to U.S. regional and global economies. Yet, several years ago, China surpassed the U.S. in imports of Persian Gulf crude, and in 2013 it was on track to overtake the U.S. as the world's number one buyer of oil from the Middle East energy-exporting bloc. This leaves the U.S. military paradoxically securing China's growing oil shipments in the region at a time when Beijing is resisting pressure from Washington to back its foreign policy in the Middle East.[66]

For decades, China and other oil-consuming nations have benefited as the U.S. spent billions of dollars a year to secure shipping lanes and a stable energy flow from the Middle East. Yet, in the coming years the U.S. will become energy self-sufficient, thanks to fracking technology which will eventually make the U.S. the number-one oil producer and end its dependence on imported oil, including from the Middle East. Yet it is anticipated that China's reliance on the region's oil will keep growing over the same period.[67]

China's rise as a dominant buyer of Middle East oil presents a new strategic equation for it and the U.S., exposing China's strategic vulnerability as its economy and energy security grow increasingly dependent on oil from a region dominated by the U.S. military. When tankers depart Persian Gulf terminals for China, they rely heavily on the U.S. Fifth Fleet that secures the area. China's military capabilities to defend its own interests in the Middle East are limited. The Chinese navy, despite making rapid technological progress in having launched its first aircraft carrier in 2012, is relatively weak and inexperienced. It does not have the military firepower or expertise to actively secure conflict zones or shipping lanes.[68] Its biggest military deployment in the region took place during modest anti-piracy operations off the coast of Somalia. Indeed, when it came to evacuating its citizens from Libya in 2011 during fighting there, China was forced to rely mainly on chartering ferries. With its current resources, China has no way of using military force to protect its interests and energy security in the Middle East. The only protection for China's oil shipments in the region is the existing strong U.S. military presence.[69]

For the U.S., China's oil thirst means allocating military funds to benefit a country which many Americans see as a strategic rival and which frequently does not side with its own foreign policy in the region. At a time of global financial crisis and growing national debt, the U.S. cannot continue to "subsidize" China's oil shipments from the Middle East in this way. More and more Americans now believe China should bear part of these expenses, rather than continue enjoying its "free ride" with the U.S. Navy.[70] Moreover, senior U.S. leaders have criticized China for obstructing its own stance against the Syrian and Iranian regimes at the United Nations. Over the coming years, securing energy sources in the Middle East will add more fuel to diplomatic tensions between China and the U.S.[71]

Regional stability

Washington's second ongoing goal in the Middle East is to preserve regional stability and protect its security through counter-terrorism and counter-proliferation, with particular focus on preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear power. Yet the 2011 pullout of U.S. troops from Iraq and the U.S. military "reset" in the Gulf region that is expected to follow in the coming years will change calculations by Iran and by U.S. allies in the region about their own security needs after two decades of constant U.S. military presence in and around Iraq and its ongoing containment of Iran.[72] As Iran looks to neighboring Iraq for opportunities to exert greater influence, the Iranian nuclear program will continue to challenge U.S. goals in the region. These continuing tensions will raise the risk of military conflict or damage to regional stability.[73]

Furthermore, the U.S. desire to promote democracy and human rights in the changing Middle East is proving increasingly problematic. Given the scale and velocity of political turmoil associated with the Arab uprisings, the U.S. must rebalance and adjust its foreign policy and interests in this volatile environment. Washington must position itself effectively within a region that will not likely to stabilize soon. Given the economic constraints impacting the U.S. economy, it will probably be unable to consider additional military interventions to deal with regional instability (such as in Syria or Iran) or to embark on new or expanded programs of aid and trade negotiations to encourage emerging democracies (such as Egypt, Libya, and Yemen).[74]

The U.S. is willing to support both new and old Arab regimes in order to fight terrorism and advance democracy and human rights in the region. Indeed, the main objective of the Iraq



War was to remove the regime of Saddam Hussein and to create a pro-American democracy. This strategy hinged on the belief that a new Iraqi democracy would launch a far-reaching regional transformation, ushering in a wave of pro-American democracies, solving the terrorism problem, and strengthening the moderate camp for peace and security in the Middle East. However, post-Saddam Iraq is at best a quasi-democracy and far from pro-American. Moreover, the regime change in Iraq created an almost paradoxical reaction: rather than strengthening the moderate camp in the region, it has strengthened the extremists in the Persian Gulf.[75]

Although the Iraq War seriously weakened the U.S. economy and military power, it remains a very powerful country. The economic cost of the Iraq War is largely short-term and relatively manageable. Consequences of the Iraq War on U.S. strategy and objectives in the Middle East for the long term are not necessarily all somber. Washington is still the leading economic and military power and will remain indispensable to any solution of the region's problems. Further, as the next section will show, the Iraq War has also created economic and strategic opportunities and benefits for the U.S.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES

Strategically, the consequences of the Iraq War have not led to any sudden dissolution of U.S. power and influence in the world, and have not led to a split in the western alliance.[76] Also, the aftermath of the Iraq War has not opened more opportunity for contenders to U.S. power and influence in the world. Any existing challengers, like China, Russia, and India, would have emerged in any case, particularly in light of Asia's growing energy needs and the desire of both oil consumers—China and India—and oil producers—Iraq and the Gulf States—to diversify their markets.[77]

More broadly, the claim that the Iraq War has in some way aided rising powers, like China, or generated new strategic competition between global powers is probably an overstatement. China was already a rising power in the region; its core interests are more economic than political or strategic; and the Iraq War, like any war, provided an opportunity to expand its Middle East footprint. China, as any country would, worked hard to exploit the economic opportunities generated by the occupation of Iraq, just as it does elsewhere in the world.[78]

Finally, the U.S. strategic decision to pivot towards Asia is one of the Obama Administration's central foreign policy initiatives. The Asia-Pacific region is depicted by the Obama administration as the main arena of U.S. political, economic, and military interest.[79] Washington wanted to signal that the Bush-era obsessions with the Middle East, democratization and terrorism were over. The September 11th attacks and the subsequent occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan diverted U.S. attention from the Middle East as an economic center of gravity.[80]

A 2012 U.S. Department of Defense paper states that Washington seeks to "re-balance" its interests, from Europe and the Middle East toward East Asia, and that it perceives China as a threat to U.S. engagement in the region[81]. According to that paper, China's emergence as a regional power has the potential to affect U.S. economic, security, and political goals; as China's military power grows, the U.S. must clarify its strategic intentions in order to avoid causing friction in the region.

Although Obama administration officials have often stated that their strategies do not target any one particular country, many in China believe these are responses, at least in part, to its growing influence.[82] China's rise in East Asia also represents a strategic threat to U.S. allies in the region, like South Korea, Japan, and Australia. The U.S. is the only power with enough strength to check China's rise, and many of these allies have sought reassurance from U.S. that it is still and will remain invested in the region. It is not a coincidence that in 2012, the Philippines allowed the semi-permanent rotational deployment of U.S. military forces at Subic Bay base for the first time in almost 20 years.[83]

There is no doubt that the end of the U.S. military presence in Iraq and Afghanistan shifted U.S. attention to the Asia-Pacific Region. Beginning in 2012, Washington's "Pivot to Asia" policy has swung from attempting to cooperate with China on global problems to pushing back against Chinese assertiveness and challenges to the balance of power in the region and the wider international system.[84] This new American strategy may lead to a zero-sum rivalry in East Asia with China and perhaps a new "Cold War" or "anti-China alliance." Such a development would be detrimental to Chinese foreign policy, hindering its core interests and rise to great power status in the region.

Additionally, the "Pivot to Asia" strategy offers Washington the chance to reduce its military deployments in the Middle East and increase them in the Asia-Pacific. However, U.S.



plans are one thing, and the reality in the Middle East is another. The assumption that conflicts in the Middle East will be reduced and the U.S. military presence become less essential may prove misguided. This shifting U.S. policy in the Middle East may ultimately lead to high costs, with the danger of unnecessary economic and strategic loss. A continuing strong U.S. military presence in the Middle East is vital for protecting its own interests, contributing to regional security, and preparing to respond to regional crisis. The U.S. must maintain its traditional military deployments in the Gulf region so it can deter, contain, and defend against Iranian ambitions for hegemony, as well as to ensure the accessibility and stability of energy supplies.

Economically, the West in fact stands to benefit from the encroachment of Chinese companies into the Iraqi oil industry.[85] First, Chinese companies increasing their investment in the Iraqi oil industry reduces energy competition with U.S. firms elsewhere around the world. China's heavy investment in the Iraqi oil sector means that U.S. firms can buy oil at a discount in friendly markets where previously they had to compete with Chinese oil companies.[86] Second, since the Iraqi oil sector had been badly degraded by years of U.N sanctions and mismanagement, the rebuilding process will be a huge, costly, and long-term project. Iraq's Deputy Prime Minister for Energy estimates that energy infrastructure in Iraq requires capital expenditures of \$30 billion annually to meet production targets, and U.S. oil firms are not likely to foot that bill.[87] Therefore, China's willingness to invest billions of dollars in the Iraqi energy sector is a great solution to help rebuild Iraq while allowing for a pause in U.S. investment, which could speed recovery of the American economy.

Third, China's involvement in the Iraqi oil industry reduces its reliance on energy imports from Iran. Since 2012, due to hard-hitting Western sanctions against it, Iran's energy sector has become unpredictable as a source of oil for China. By diversifying its energy imports, buying more and more oil from Iraq and reducing its reliance on Iranian oil, China is creating a basis for cooperation with the U.S. to enforce sanctions against Tehran and reach a negotiated solution to the Iran nuclear program. Chinese involvement in the Iraqi energy sector will help the U.S. impose sanctions on Iran's oil exports without severely disrupting the global economy.[88] The Obama administration needs China's support to pressure Tehran to abandon its nuclear ambitions and to promote security and stability in the region. China also shares the U.S.'s interest in avoiding renewed sectarian or other ethnic conflict in Iraq.[89] China's increasing investment in the Iraqi oil industry is actually good news for the U.S., which is finding it harder and harder to finance global policing operations. Chinese oil companies' investment in the Iraqi oil industry forces Beijing to care more about peace and stability in Iraq and the Middle East.[90] It will likely also forcing China to act less like a "free rider" and more like a responsible stakeholder power actively contributing to regional to peace and stability. Iraq badly needs China's aid and attention to keep its political system and economy together.

Furthermore, Chinese investment in the Iraqi oil industry makes an important contribution to the rebuilding of the U.S. economy. China is the world's biggest oil importer and according to all forecasts, its oil import demand will only increase in the coming years.[91] That could put upward pressure on oil prices, raising the price tag for Western oil imports as well. Furthermore, China's growing oil needs make it vulnerable to the changes in the global energy market and to the instability among suppliers, forcing it to pay more for oil imports. That kind of demand spike could potentially raise prices globally, including for U.S. oil companies. However, with China concentrating its financial and technological efforts on developing Iraqi oil, it will no longer compete with the U.S. for oil from other sources. In consequence, China's purchase of Iraqi oil reduces the chances of such a scenario and the severity of its consequences.

Although it is clear that China has emerged as one of the biggest energy beneficiaries of the Iraq War, negotiating lucrative deals,[92] while Western energy firms have lowered their interest in Iraq, this development is not necessarily bad for the U.S. economy. Even if China were to purchase all of Iraq's oil, the U.S. could attain energy self-sufficiency by as early as 2017, according to the IEA, thanks to the new extraction technology of fracking. Fracking will quickly position the U.S. as the number-one oil producer globally, even enabling it to export oil. In fact, the U.S. is projected to become the world's largest oil producer, overtaking both Saudi Arabia and Russia by 2016.[93] Additionally, new technology is unleashing vast reserves of gas from shale deposits in the U.S., which may overtake Russia in gas production within the next decade. The result will likely be a continued drop in U.S. oil imports from the Middle East and a changing strategy in the region, accelerating the shift towards Asia desired by the the Obama administration.[94]



The bottom line is that the Iraq War did not necessarily damage U.S. economic interests in the long term, and may have even provided some important strategic achievements to U.S. objectives in the Middle East. Although the consequences of the Iraq War certainly did cause strategic and economic losses to U.S., it also provided great economic benefits and strategic advantages. For example, China's increased presence in the region will absolve the U.S. of further responsibility for the Iraqi economy. With China now the only country taking major risks on Iraq's future by heavily investing in its oil industry, any blame for a failure in Iraq's economic rebuilding process will land squarely on China's shoulders.

Conclusion

The Iraq War may have helped shift U.S. predominance in world politics, but its impact on the global balance of power has so far been less severe than predicted. Ten years after the Iraq War, the Middle East geostrategic situation and the balance of power have undergone huge changes, some of which the war helped to generate (like the Arab Spring events), but there have also been many features of continuity. Specifically, U.S. strategic influence in the Middle East has weakened, its economy declined, and its military power been eroded, allowing China and other countries to expand their influence in the region.

The study findings suggest it is important to separate myth from reality and take a long hard look at the impact of the Iraq War. **In the short term, China looks like the clear winner of the Iraq War, but this isn't the whole story.** China has reaped many economic benefits and achievements. Yet in the long run, Beijing has little cause for celebration, especially in light of the strategic challenges and economic risks that lie ahead. Increased Chinese involvement in Iraq's economic rebuilding process and energy sector is not necessarily bad for U.S. economic objectives in the Middle East, while the strategic challenges to the U.S. in the Middle East are reason for concern regarding China's economic and strategic objectives.

Analyzing the question of who won the Iraq War, in retrospect and looking ahead, the answer depends on our perspective. Taking the short-term perspective, whether from an economic or strategic standpoint, China indeed seems like the clear winner of the Iraq War in every way. However, from a long-term economic and strategic perspective, the results are actually quite different.

Although the Iraq war seriously hindered U.S. strategic objectives in the region, the damage to China has been no less severe, and may even be greater in the future because of its dependence on U.S. presence in the Middle East, a presence which is vital for Chinese economic development and energy security. **At present, China has no way of using military force to protect its interests and energy security in the Middle East, so it relies on a strong U.S. military to protect its oil shipments in the region.**

Despite the U.S. withdrawal from Iraq, its military presence remains in place throughout the Persian Gulf. Even as the Obama administration has declared its pivot toward Asia and its desire to work toward energy independence, the U.S. is not prepared to abandon its presence in the Middle East. Washington influence in the region provides a valuable level of strategic and economic influence over its competitors and rivals alike. These circumstances present important challenges for Chinese Middle East foreign policy, especially as its reliance on the region's energy resources continues to grow.

The new challenges of IS

Finally, since the withdrawal of U.S. troops, Iraq has faced a growing crisis as the Sunni jihadist group the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) threatens to drag Iraq back into a state of civil war. Unfortunately for the Obama administration, most prominent among the nations considering aiding the Iraqi government are China and Iran, two countries with which the U.S. has a particularly complex relationship. China, as the biggest foreign investor in Iraqi oil, is anxiously watching the mounting crisis in Iraq. China is ready to work alongside Iran, a key player and ally in the region, to restore stability. In addition, growing ties between Iraq and Iran will challenge U.S. control in the country and the region.

If Iran gains influence and control in Iraq, then this will challenge U.S. control and order in the region. Yet, if Washington's goal is a stable Iraq, then working alongside Iran makes sense. Cooperation and coordination with Tehran could help stabilize Iraq while letting the U.S. focus on higher priorities—namely, its true competitor, China—and avoiding re-entanglement in the Iraqi mess. Additionally, successful cooperation with Tehran on the



Iraq crisis could pave the way for further cooperation on other Middle-East issues, possibly alleviating U.S. tensions surrounding Iran's nuclear program.

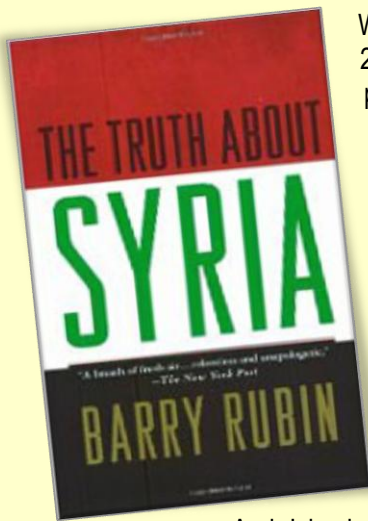
► Notes are available at source's URL.

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FREE BOOK – The Truth About Syria

By Barry Rubin (Author)

Source: http://www.gloria-center.org/pt_free_books/?utm_source=activetrail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=MERIA%20Journal%20Vol.%2018,%20No.%203%20%28Fall%202014%29



When I wrote The Truth About Syria, published by Palgrave-MacMillan in 2007 with a paperback in 2008, I tried to explain why the country was so pivotal in the Middle East and for U.S. interests. It was a case study of the old radical nationalist dictatorships, how they stayed in power, and why they were failing. The book also made the point, ignored by the Obama administration from the day it took office in 2009 to well after the civil war began there, that such a regime would not be moderated simply because militancy so well served its interest.

I described in great detail how the dictatorship worked there and why it was running into increasing trouble. Pointing out how the rulers were pushing revolutionary Islamism, despite the fact that they were secular and not even Muslims, I suggested that this may well prove to be a suicidal strategy.

Four years later, Syria blew up. The book is still a good guide to the regime there and the causes of the "Arab Spring" and rise of Sunni

Arab Islamism to power.

Incidentally, an unauthorized edition was published in Arabic in Beirut and smuggled into Syria. It has been gratifying to hear from Lebanese moderates and Syrian oppositionist liberals how much they liked the book and how accurate they found it to be.

► You can download (free) this very interesting book (pp.222) from source's URL.

European ISIS fighters: Are there really 3,000 jihadis?

Source: <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Security-Watch/terrorism-security/2014/0927/European-ISIS-fighters-Are-there-really-3-000-jihadis-video>

The European Union's Anti-Terrorism Chief Gilles de Kerchove told the BBC Friday that the number of Islamic State fighters from Europe is "probably above 3,000, which is unprecedented."

That statement prompted a number of sensational headlines - especially in Britain, where the Parliament voted Friday to join the airstrikes against ISIS.

But 3,000 Islamic State fighters is probably an inflated figure. Mr. de Kerchove himself qualifies that total saying 3,000 includes all those who have been to the region, including those who have returned and those who have been killed there.

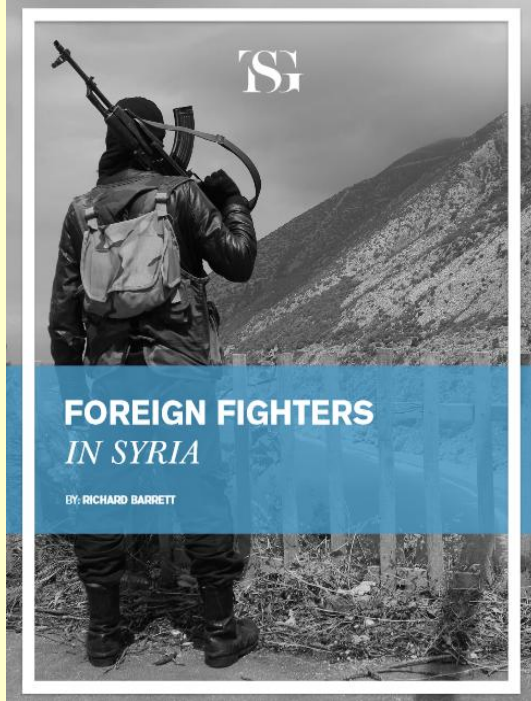
The European jihadis threat assessment includes the dead? Out of those estimated 3,000, how many of those European ISIS jihadis are still alive?



If Europeans are trying to assess the long-term risk of the ISIS campaign becoming a domestic terror threat, this is a relevant number. And what's the breakdown on those IS fighters who are already back in Europe vs. those still in the Middle East?

In the US, the ISIS threat suddenly got smaller this week.

Last week, Matthew Olsen, the director of the National Counterterrorism Center, said: "Thousands of foreign fighters have flocked to Syria over the past three years. This includes more than 2,000 Europeans and more than a hundred Americans."



The figure of more than 100 Americans fighting with ISIS has been cited by several Obama administration officials and members of the US Congress.

But on Thursday, the FBI director challenged that number.

The US only knows of about 12 Americans who are currently in Syria fighting, FBI Director James Comey said Thursday.

Where did the "more than 100 Americans" fighting with IS figure come from?

"When I use a number of more than 100, that means people who have gone and come back, people who have attempted to go and we locked them up, people who have gone and stayed," Mr. Comey said during an interview with reporters at FBI headquarters, according to the Associated Press.

That sounds very similar to how the Europeans are counting ISIS fighters.

Read also a slightly different approach (regarding numbers) from Richard Barrett, Senior VP at The Soufan Group (June 2014) at:

<http://soufangroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/TSG-Foreign-Fighters-in-Syria.pdf>

As The Christian Science Monitor reported earlier this month, most political leaders are over-exaggerating the Islamic State domestic terrorism threat.

The most cited research out there comes from a study conducted by a Norwegian expert of extremism, Thomas Hegghammer, between 1990 and 2010. His research showed that only one of nine foreign fighters who had come home were motivated to carry out an attack.

It's a figure that officials don't necessarily accept as fact, but it does provide a baseline for them to assess threats. In an interview with The Christian Science Monitor, for a cover story on European jihadis, the European Union's counterterrorism coordinator Gilles de Kerchove says that even if the threat is "one percent of more than 2,000 [jihadis], that is 20 very dangerous guys" who've been trained, indoctrinated, and woven into networks across the Sunni world. "Their level of tolerance for violence will have increased significantly," says Mr. De Kerchove.

Note that a little more than a month ago, de Kerchove said the European IS fighter tally was "more than 2,000."

The International Center for the Study of Radicalization at King's College London, also estimated a month ago that as many as 2,000 Europeans have already fled to Syria. The French government estimates 700 young people have left from France alone – the largest number from any country on the Continent. Up to 500 youths from Britain have joined Syrian rebel groups, more than 300 from Germany, and at least 100 from the Netherlands, the Monitor reported, in its story "Why young Europeans are becoming jihadis."

When asked by the BBC by the sudden jump in his estimate of European jihadis, de Kerchove said: "It's steady growth. I wouldn't say it's a 'boom.' And probably the statement of the establishment of a caliphate played a role. If you believe in this, probably you want to be a part of it as early as possible and not to arrive late."



EDITOR'S COMMENT: Suppose all numbers are more or less accurate. How do they calculate these numbers? Numbers also goes along with persons and passports' details. If this is the case we should stop worry about them (or those survived field operations) returning back home and do evil things! We will wait for them at the airports or bus/train stations and ports to arrest them and jail them – providing they arrive in the right hub (see the very recent French experience...) If this is NOT the case, then this is the problem we have and we have to deal with – yesterday! To be honest: I strongly believe that we have no idea about the numbers and the persons that joined the IS! **And if I may, I will make a prediction: the West (collectively) will face at LEAST ONE terrorist attack in the months to follow.** For this single (if we are lucky) attack we have to be prepared and do our best for the people we are assigned to serve and protect! Because "you have to be lucky all the times; we have to be lucky ONLY ONCE!" – remember the IRA statement after the unsuccessful attempt to murder late former UK PM Margaret Thatcher?



How Much Will the ISIS Fight Cost?

Source: <http://www.govexec.com/defense/2014/09/how-much-will-isis-fight-cost/95237/?oref=river>

The United States is spending between \$7 million and \$10 million each day in the battle against ISIS,

and the Pentagon said Friday it needs more money from Congress.

"We're generally spending roughly, since this effort started, \$7 million to \$10 million a day. That's being funded out of OCO, overseas contingency operations," Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said at a Friday press conference. Commonly referred to as war funds, the money isn't subject to congressional budget caps.



The Pentagon estimated in late August that it was spending \$7.5 million a day in Iraq, where it has conducted more than 200 airstrikes. Since Monday, the U.S. and its allies have launched more than 40 strikes against targets in Syria.

Asked Thursday how much the U.S. was spending, Rear Adm. John Kirby, a Pentagon spokesman, said the department is still working to calculate official costs. He added that he "wouldn't be surprised if the answer that we come back with once we do the pencil work is different" than any estimates.

Defense Department officials are also working to project what the long-term costs will be for the ISIS fight, which is expected to take years.

Whatever the official budget ends up being, Hagel and Gen. Martin Dempsey, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said they'll have to go back to Congress to ask for more money.

"We're working now with appropriate committees on how we go forward with authorizations and funding," Hagel said.

Congress isn't expected back in Washington until after the midterm elections in November. Lawmakers from both parties have suggested that the ongoing conflict could provide the needed push to undo sequestration.

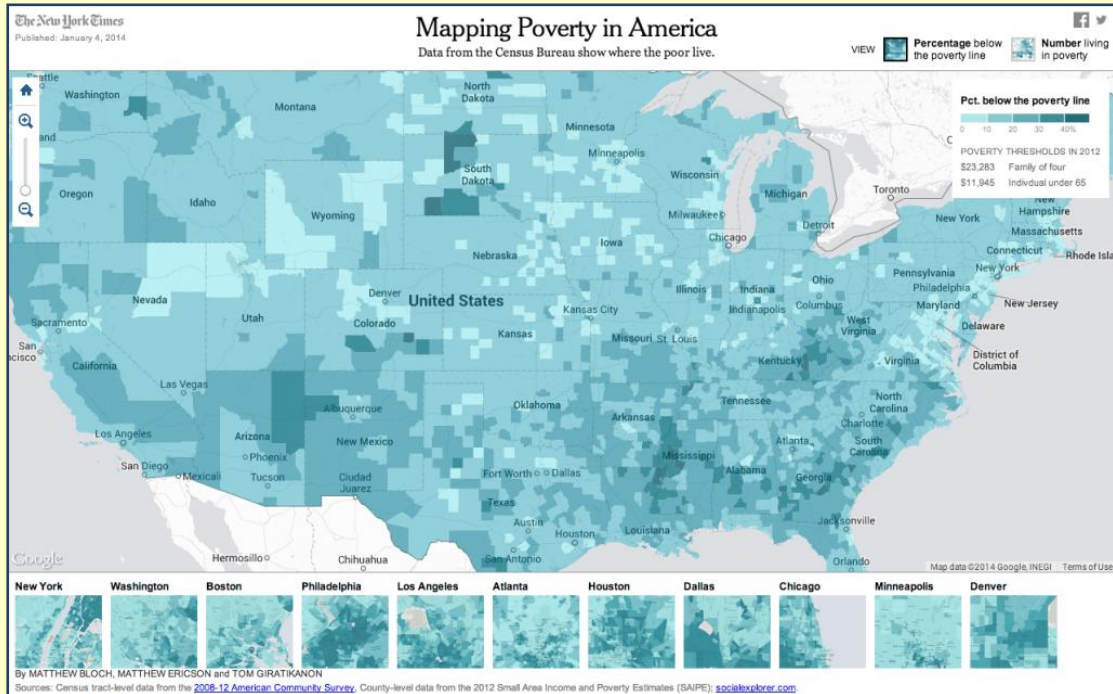
Dempsey rejected the notion that OCO should be able to cover anti-ISIS operations. He tied the funding of the ISIS

operation to the larger financial crunch the department is facing as it prepares its fiscal 2016 budget.

Without action from Congress, the budget caps, known as sequestration, would return in October 2015, the start of the 2016 fiscal year. Under President Obama's five-year budget,



the Pentagon projects that it will need more than \$535 billion in fiscal 2016. But under the budget caps, the Pentagon is expected to receive less than \$500 billion, leaving a \$35 billion budget gap. "If you are asking me do I assess right now as we go into the fall review for '16 that we're going to have budget problems? Yes," Dempsey said. "... OCO is gas money. The baseline budget is what trains and equips and organizes a force."



Source (interactive): <http://www.nytimes.com/newsgraphics/2014/01/05/poverty-map/?ref=business>



British PM David Cameron: "Non-Violent Extremists" Including "9/11 Truthers" and "Conspiracy Theorists" are Just as Dangerous as ISIL Terrorists

An Open Letter

By Peter Drew

Source: <http://www.globalresearch.ca/british-pm-david-cameron-non-violent-extremists-including-911-truthers-and-conspiracy-theorists-are-just-as-dangerous-as-isil-terrorists/5405059>



Dear Mr Cameron

I write this open letter to you in response to your recent speech at the United Nations calling for military intervention in Iraq and Syria over the threat of ISIL. In particular I would like to make mention of your reference to the so called threat to society of what you have termed 'non-violent extremists', including those who are attempting to bring forward information and evidence about 9/11 which contradicts the official version of events.

Putting aside the direct issue of ISIL for a moment, I find this position on 9/11 evidence to be quite incredible. It is a position that is either extremely ignorant, or it is a position that goes against freedom and democracy in British society to such an extent that it is scarcely believable. Huge numbers of extremely credible and professional people across the world are now bringing forward incontrovertible facts and evidence showing us that the events of 9/11 have been systematically covered up, and that the public has been deceived and manipulated on this issue at a quite incredible level. Just like the public was deceived and manipulated about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

While you are labelling these people who bring this evidence forward about 9/11 as 'non-violent extremists', are you aware of what is currently happening in New York City regarding 9/11?

Are you aware that more than 100,000 New York residents have just signed the petition calling for a new investigation into the collapse of World Trade Centre Building 7 through the 'High Rise Safety Initiative'?



Are you aware that through the fundraising efforts of public groups in the US, there is currently a massive digital screen in the centre of Times Square showing rolling video footage of the controlled demolition of World Trade Centre Building 7 to three million New Yorkers? This is footage of a collapse of a massive 47 story building (not hit by a plane) that most people have not even been aware of or seen before now. How can this level of information cover-up be possible in this day and age?

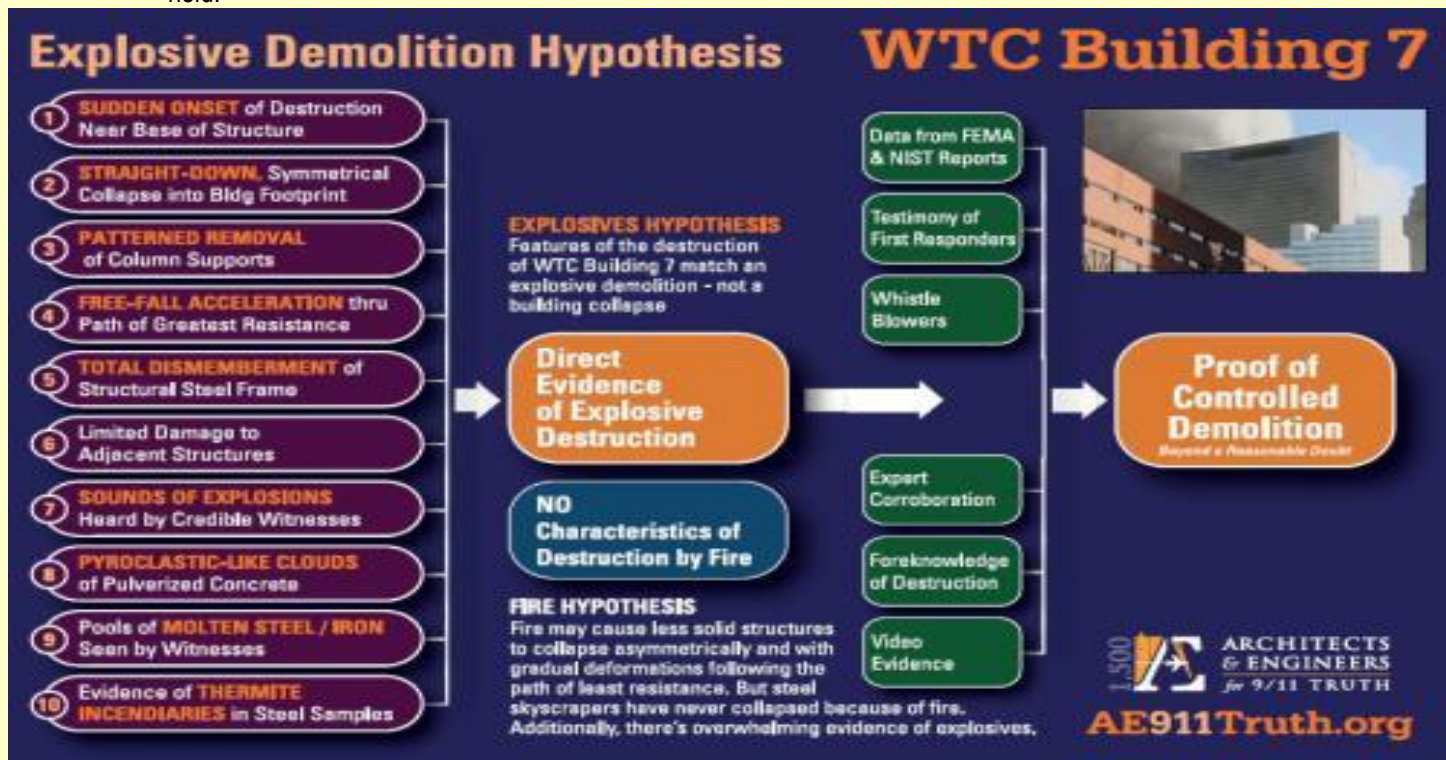
Are you aware that many members of US Congress are now demanding that President Obama release the 28 redacted pages of the 9/11 Commission Report because there is

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information in those pages that will shock the nation, according to the two members of Congress who have been authorised to view the pages?

But yet you have just stated to the world that you consider members of the public to be 'non-violent extremists' and a part of the ISIL challenge if they merely wish that these facts, evidence, and information about 9/11 be made available to the wider public and that appropriate investigations are held.



I repeat my previous point. To make that statement to the world as you did, you are either extremely ignorant about this issue, or you are attempting to take a position which is so at odds with a decent, free society that it beggars belief. I find it difficult to believe that the Prime Minister of Britain would be unaware of what I have stated here, and therefore I have to believe that it is the latter scenario that is most likely.

Just to reinforce my point here, according to what you have said, because of their views on 9/11, or because of the evidence they have brought forward, you consider the following people to be 'non-violent extremists' who are a part of the challenge that society faces with the ISIL threat:

- ✓ Members of US Congress who have called for the 28 redacted pages of the 9/11 Commission Report to be released
- ✓ 100,000 members of the New York public for formally supporting and requesting a new investigation into the collapse of World Trade Centre Building 7 on 9/11
- ✓ Dozens of first responder fire fighters who risked their lives on 9/11 and who lost 343 of their colleagues that day, including those who formed the organisation 'Fire Fighters for 9/11 Truth'
- ✓ More than 2,200 professional architects, engineers, and demolition experts from the organisation 'Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth'
- ✓ Norman Minneta – US Secretary of Transport during 9/11 who had his formal testimony to the 9/11 investigation panel stricken from the record
- ✓ Richard Clarke – US Head of Counter Terrorism during 9/11
- ✓ Numerous family members of the victims of 9/11

The above list is just a very quick start, but gives a feel for the type of people who you are now labelling as 'non-violent extremists' and a part of the battle against ISIL because of their views about 9/11 or the evidence they are bringing forward. According to your speech to the United Nations, we now need to bring in legislation that will be able to shut down internet sites that bring forward the information and the evidence that the people listed above have been trying to highlight for investigation. That to me sounds like extremist



behaviour. In fact, that sounds to me like the words of someone who is supporting an attempted cover up of monumental proportions.

It seems that everyone now acknowledges that we were deceived and manipulated on the issue of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq in order to take us to war. It also looks like we have been deceived and manipulated on a grand scale regarding the true facts about 9/11. So, on this basis, why should you or anyone else believe one word about what the United States is saying about the threat of ISIL?

You have already attempted to take the UK to war in Syria on the basis of alleged evidence against the Assad government that has since proven to be inconclusive at best. Now just a few months later you are once again attempting to take the UK to war with Syria, this time because you now have conclusive evidence of a new and different threat. Meanwhile, you consider anyone who holds views about 9/11 that are contrary to the official story to be 'non-violent extremists'.

Putting aside the direct issue of ISIL, which seems to be clouded in uncertainties in terms of exactly who they are, who and how they have been created and supported, and what their wider threat is to the world, I find your comments at the United Nations about the other aspects of this issue to be quite incredible.

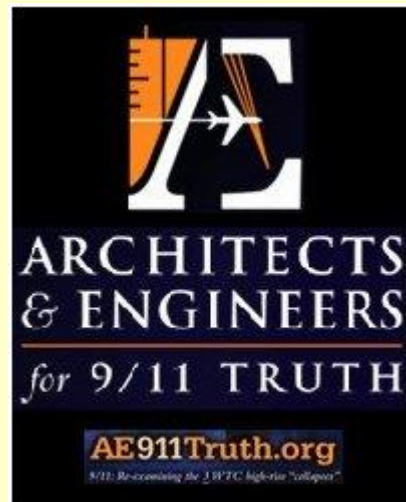
9/11 is the event that launched the so called global war on terror and military action in the Middle East. It is now incontrovertible that we have been deceived and manipulated on a large scale about the true facts of 9/11. Getting the true facts about 9/11 runs right to the heart of all the issues we currently see in the Middle East and the so called war on terror. For you to label ordinary, caring, and patriotic members of the public as 'non-violent extremists' simply for asking these questions about 9/11 and bringing forward this evidence, and to state that these types of internet sites should be censored, then I have to say that it is you who are the extremist, in the extreme.

The truth facts and evidence about 9/11 are now coming forward and there is a tidal wave of growing awareness as people are now getting to see this information, as shown by what is happening in New York City as we speak. It cannot be covered up by any crude efforts by the UK government to censor the internet or to give these people an extremist label. It is far too late for that. For anyone in office to continue to support the attempted suppression of this information will simply result in them being positioned on the wrong side of history.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Drew – MSc

UK Facilitator – Architects & Engineers for 9/11 Truth



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Knife-wielding fence-jumper 'made it all the way to the East Room.... much further into the White House than the Secret Service let on'

Source: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2774232/Knife-wielding-fence-jumper-White-House-Secret-Service-let-way-East-Room.html>

- Omar Gonzalez 'scaled the fence outside the White House, dashed across the lawn and entered the executive mansion with a knife on September 19'
- Senior sources say he made it all the way to the East Room
- It means he made it 168 feet into the building after scaling 70-foot lawn
- 80ft-long East Room is used for formal events including bill signings
- A surveillance team outside the fence did not see him and he managed to run past a too-slow Secret Service agent in a booth on the lawn

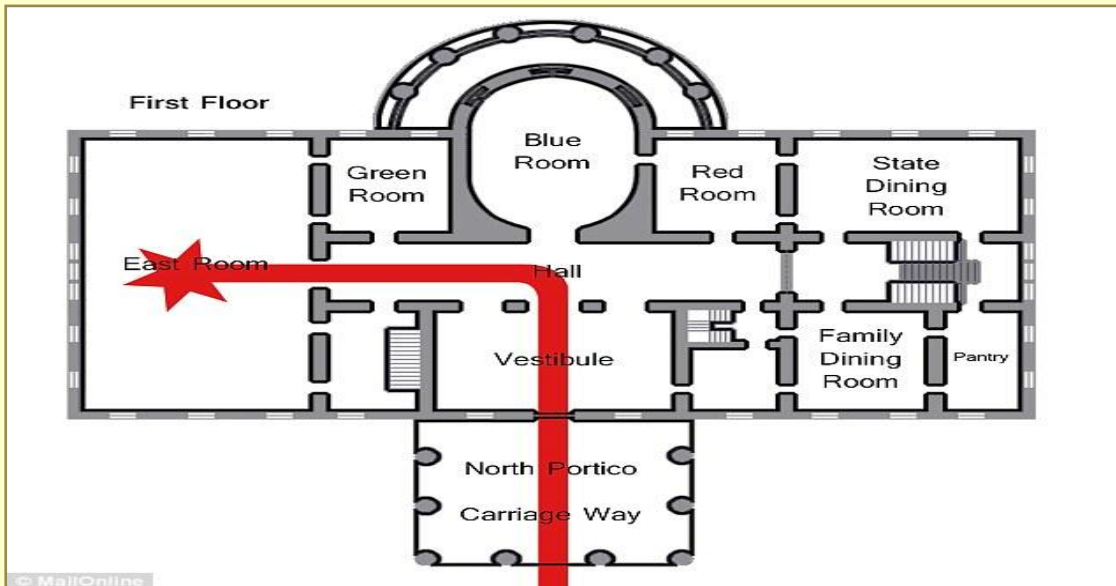


- A dog was released too late and an armed SWAT team failed to reach him before he opened a door, which should have been guarded by an agent
- Gonzalez was eventually stopped by a plainclothes agent inside

The man who jumped over the White House fence this month got further into the building than security officials let on, it has emerged.

Senior sources reveal Omar Gonzalez, 42, made it all the way to the East Room of the first floor as he tore past five rings of security on September 19 wielding a knife.

He allegedly ran freely across the 70-yard front lawn, through the North Portico hall past a guard, and into the East Room, which is next to the staircase leading to the family's living quarters - 168 feet into the executive mansion.



Eventually, he was subdued in the Green Room by a plainclothes guard.

Route: Gonzalez allegedly made it 168 feet into the building, through the North Portico hall to the East Room

The East Room of the White House is an 80-foot-long hall used for formal events including bill signings, press conferences, receptions and ceremonies.

A Secret Service official who spoke on condition of anonymity told the **Washington Post** an alarm box near the front entrance of the White House had been muted.

'The Secret Service has no comment on that at this time due to the ongoing investigation,' Brian Leary, a spokesman for the agency, said of the Post story.

A White House spokesman declined comment.

The revelations come a day after a report revealed the Secret Service was unaware for four days that a man had fired a high-powered rifle at the White House in 2011 in a 'fumbled' response that left the Obamas furious.

Officers allegedly performed a string of security lapses after Oscar Ramiro Ortega-Hernandez shot at least seven bullets at the executive mansion in Washington from his car.

At the time, President Barack Obama, his wife Michelle and their older daughter Malia were not at home, but their younger daughter Sasha and Mrs Obama's mother, Marian Robinson, were inside.

Tomorrow, Secret Service director Julia Pierson will be forced to respond to both incidents at a hearing with the Government Reform Committee.

Gonzalez, a homeless Iraq veteran, was charged with unlawfully entering a restricted building or grounds while carrying a deadly or dangerous weapon.

Security officials say he did not express any wish to harm the president instead claiming he just wanted to tell him that the 'atmosphere was collapsing'.



Still, his successful attempt on the White House raises serious security questions. He is the first person believed to have jumped the fence and made it into the building.



A prosecutor said in court last week that officers found more than 800 rounds of ammunition, two hatchets and a machete in Gonzalez's car.

Serving his country: Gonzalez, pictured with then-sister-in-law Nancy Hoover and her husband, served three tours in Iraq before suffering injuries in an IED blast. He has been homeless for the last three months

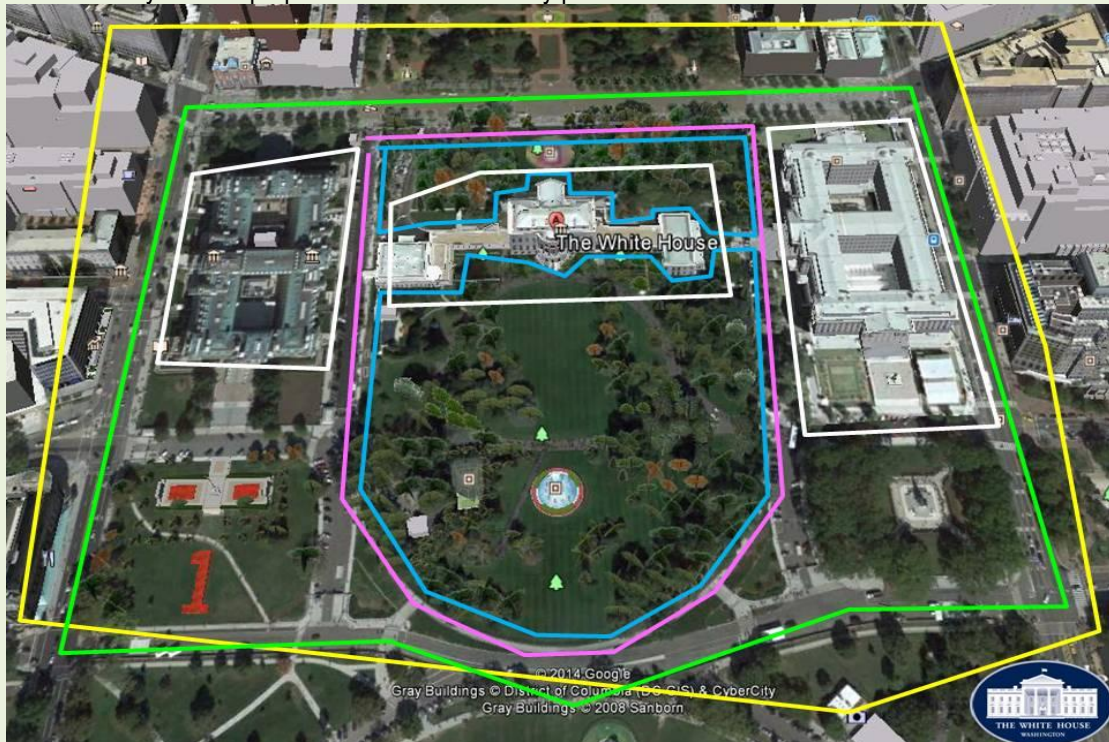
Gonzalez, who completed three tours of Iraq, had been arrested in July with a sniper rifle and a map on which the executive mansion was marked, the prosecutor said.

The alarm box near the entrance, designed to alert guards to an intruder, had been muted at what officers believe was the request of the usher's office, the Post said, citing the Secret Service official.

The officer posted inside the door appeared to be delayed in learning the intruder was about to come through, the Post said. Officers are trained to lock the front door immediately if they learn of an intruder on the grounds.

EDITOR'S THOUGHTS...

1. Below is my humble proposal for a better security plan.



- Yellow line : High-buildings surveillance (CCTV, heli-UAV, snipers);
- Green line : Plain clothing surveillance teams (armed);
- Purple line : Uniformed surveillance teams (armed);
- Blue line : K9 guarding areas (4 teams in front; 2 teams in the back);
- White line : SWAT guarding areas.

2. The incident happened in day light. What if it was during night hours?



3. There are numerous blueprints available on the Internet – some of them 3-D; others with lots of details (doors, stairs, levels etc). What for?
4. Is Julia Pierson [Head of President's security] (and guards on duty) still in place?
5. White House's personnel evacuated. Why?
6. What if the veteran arrested had a home and a minimal income as a small ethical compensation for serving his country well? Would he even think about it?

Most probably what I propose is already in place (and many more I presume); but a plan is nothing if not regularly tested and updated. Sixteen (16) incidents in the last 5 yrs – 6 in 2014 alone – are too many when comes to the residence of the President of the United States! Not to mention that very recently the President was on elevator together with an armed contractor with criminal record (CDC, Atlanta)...

UPDATE (Oct 01): Julia Pierson, the first female director of the Secret Service, resigned her post Wednesday after a fence jumper gained access to the White House on Sept. 19 and a subsequent congressional inquiry uncovered other security lapses.

START Annual Meeting Research Presentations available online

Source: http://www.start.umd.edu/news/start-annual-meeting-research-presentations-available-online?utm_source=START%20Announce&utm_campaign=9c66e52dea-START_Newsletter_Sept2014&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a60ca8c769-9c66e52dea-14081393



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START researchers from around the country gathered with students, scholars and government representatives to discuss their ongoing and recently completed research. The forum provided an opportunity to present in both short form (Quick Fires) and long form (Research Showcases). Slides from those presentations are below.

Research Showcases

Counterterrorism

- [Government Actions in Terror Environments: Moving Beyond Deterrence](#) presented by Laura Dugan
- [Comparing Failed, Foiled, Completed and Successful Terrorist Attacks](#) presented by Erik J. Dahl
- [Terrorism-centric Behavior Recognition and Adversarial Threat Characterization](#) presented by James L. Regens
- [Understanding Law Enforcement Intelligence Processes](#) presented by Steven Chermak

Countering Violent Extremism

- [Evaluating Jihadist Narratives](#) presented by David Webber
- [CVE Enhanced Community Policing & Accelerating CVE](#) presented by Stevan Weine MD
- [Training in Risk and Crisis Communication: TRACC Overview](#) presented by Holly Roberts
- [Deradicalization of Former Members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam](#) presented by David Webber

Lone Actors

- [Far-Right Homicide: Loners, Lone Wolves, and Wolf Packs](#) presented by Jeff Gruenewald
- [Psychology of Lone-Actor Terrorists](#) presented by Clark McCauley
- [Geospatial and Temporal Patterns of Lone Actor Terrorism](#) presented by Brent L. Smith
- [Profiles of Individual Radicalization in the United States \(PIRUS\)](#) presented by Gary LaFree and Patrick James



Gun silencers in the U.S – a terror threat

Source: <http://i-hls.com/2014/09/gun-silencers-u-s-terror-threat/>

Gun silencers could become more widespread in Florida under new legislation to allow the devices on hunters' weapons on public land. Experts say that silencers will allow terror groups to train without attracting attention.



Silencers, or 'suppressors' as they are known to gun enthusiasts, are currently illegal on public land but many veteran hunters say they're essential when using high-velocity weapons to prevent hearing loss.

However, anti-gun lobbyists claim that in the wrong hands, silencers make guns even more deadly.

The law supporters claim that a silencer was important as hunting with a powerful rifle can lead to hearing loss over time. The use of a silencer also prevents animals from getting spooked.

However the potential relaxing of the law on silencers has caused outrage in groups who campaign against gun violence.

Silencers are already legal in the state of Florida, along with another 38 states, under the National Firearms Act, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

California, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont and the District of Columbia have banned silencers for individuals.

In applicable states, a gun owner who wants a silencer must apply to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, pay 200 USD and undergo a criminal background check.

In Florida, a gun-owner is able to use a silencer on a weapon 'for all lawful purposes'. For example, a gun that is kept on private property for self-defense or one that is used in military or law enforcement professions could be legally allowed to have a silencer.

If you have a silencer without the correct paperwork, you are committing a felony. Violent crimes committed using weapons with silencers are punishable by up to 30 years in prison.

A silencer must also be registered with the ATF and be properly stored.

Greek Police Foil Far-Left Militant Bomb Plot

Source: <http://abcnews.go.com/International/wireStory/greek-police-foil-left-militant-bomb-plot-25919673>

October 02 – **Greek police foiled a planned weekend bomb attack by a far-left militant group against the headquarters of the country's ruling center-right New Democracy party, on the day it plans to celebrate its 40th anniversary (October 4th).**

Public Order Minister Vassilis Kikilias said plans for Saturday's attack were found in a police raid in Athens on Wednesday, when a suspect was arrested and held on terror-related charges.

"This was a strike that was aimed at weakening the country's institutions and our economy, at a time when we are struggling to emerge from (financial) crisis," Kikilias said Thursday.

He said police also found records of others believed to be on a list of potential targets, including ship owners, the chairman of Greece's industry federation and the chairman of Greece's largest soccer club, Olympiakos.

"We found details of their homes, their workplace and their movements," Kikilias said.





The suspect was identified as a Greek man who was refusing to cooperate with police inquiries, but no further details were given. New Democracy leads the country's coalition government, which has imposed tough austerity measures



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in exchange for international bailout loans. Senior party officials are due to gather at a different central Athens location Saturday for anniversary celebrations.



Wednesday's raid was ordered in connection with the arrest in July of fugitive militant Nikos Maziotis following a daytime central Athens shootout.

Maziotis, who was injured in the shooting, had been convicted in absentia last year and sentenced to 25 years for participation in Revolutionary Struggle, a group active between 2003 and 2009 and best known for firing a rocket-propelled grenade into the U.S. Embassy, in an attack that caused no injuries.

Separately on Thursday, **police destroyed a suspicious parcel sent to the Athens Stock Exchange** that was stopped at the mailroom and didn't disrupt trading.

Police said the parcel sent to the stock exchange contained gunpowder and batteries, but it was unclear whether it was fully rigged to explode. A police statement says the anti-terrorism squad is investigating Thursday's incident.



Isis could become 'world's first truly terrorist state' and bomb UK with nuclear and chemical weapons, Theresa May warns

Source: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/isis-could-become-worlds-first-truly-terrorist-state-and-bomb-uk-with-nuclear-and-chemical-weapons-theresa-may-warns-9765049.html>

Isis could acquire nuclear and biological weapons to launch attacks on Britain, the Home Secretary warned today as she set out new measures to clamp down on extremist groups.



In a speech to the Tory party conference that concentrated almost entirely on the threat from terrorism at home and abroad, Theresa May warned that the jihadist group could become the "world's first truly terrorist state" in Iraq and Syria.

"If [Isis] succeed in firmly consolidating their grip on the land they occupy in Syria and Iraq, we will see the world's first truly terrorist state established within a few hours flying time of our country," she said.

"We will see terrorists given the space to plot attacks against us, train their men and women, and devise new methods to kill indiscriminately."

"We will see the risk, often prophesied but thank God not yet fulfilled, that with the capability of a state behind them, the terrorists will acquire chemical, biological or even nuclear weapons to attack us.

"We must not flinch. We must not shy away from our responsibility. We must not drift towards danger and insecurity. While we still have the chance, we must act to destroy them." In a bid to counter the threat of home-grown terrorism, Ms May said the next Tory manifesto would include a renewed commitment to the Communications Data Bill – the so-called "snoopers' charter".

The measure, first championed by Ms May two years ago, would have required phone and internet companies to maintain records of people's internet, email and mobile phone activity – though not the content of the calls or messages.

It was finally abandoned after running into strong resistance from the Liberal Democrats, a roadblock which Ms May slammed today as "outrageously irresponsible".

She told the conference: "The lesson of history tells us that when our enemies say they want to attack us, they mean it.

"Innocent people are in danger right now. If we do not act, we risk sleepwalking into a society in which crime can no longer be investigated and terrorists can plot their murderous schemes undisrupted.

"We have to give the police and the security services the powers they need to keep us safe, and that is what the next Conservative government will do."

She warned there had been a "rapid and dangerous" decline in detectives' ability to access online communications, with the police forced to abandon 20 investigations, including 13 in which a child was at risk of harm.

The Tories are also promising a ban on so-called hate preachers and other extremists being interviewed on television or speaking at public meetings, Ms May said, as well as an extension of ministers' authority to outlaw groups suspected of encouraging terrorism or violence.

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EDITOR'S COMMENT: What is the reasoning for such "loud" crystal ball statements? Now it is time for actions and a unique opportunity to reverse existing status in England or former Great Britain if you prefer (following the Scottish Referendum). It is time to do things; scary scenarios' practices of the past do not motivate or even worry people anymore.



Mysterious signs on Greek walls...

The moment that officially we do not have IS supporters in Greece...



Islamic State's flag

UNESCO Confirms ISIS Funding Terrorism by Selling Artifacts

Source: <http://news.artnet.com/in-brief/unesco-confirms-isis-funding-terrorism-by-selling-artifacts-119588>



UNESCO has warned that ISIS is looting and selling ancient artifacts on the black market to finance their terrorist activities, the *AFP* reported. These latest findings contribute to growing evidence that ISIS continues to raise money by selling stolen antiquities (see "[Is ISIS Bankrolling Terrorist Activities With Stolen Antiquities?](#)"). Experts gathered at UNESCO's Paris headquarters on Monday to discuss the effects on

cultural heritage caused by the crisis in Iraq. UNESCO chief Irina Bokova condemned what she called the "cultural cleansing" of Iraq and revealed that UNESCO had alerted museums, Interpol, and the World Customs Organization to be vigilant "over objects that could come from the current looting of Iraqi heritage."



According to Baghdad Museum director Qais Rashid, "Assyrian tablets were stolen and suddenly found in European cities." He added that "the Mosul Museum, the second most important in Iraq, suffered an attack from Daesh [an alternative name for ISIS] and they also attacked the staff from the museum." Describing another incident Rashid said "Daesh gathered over 1,500 manuscripts from convents and other holy places and burnt all of them in the middle of the city square."



Musul Museum



Interior view

The extremists have also destroyed shrines and churches throughout the country (see "[ISIS Destroying Iraq's Cultural Heritage One Site at a Time](#)"), including the Nabi Yunus shrine in Mosul, the tomb of the Prophet Jonah which was revered by Muslims as well as Christians (see "[ISIS Militants Demolish Jonah's Tomb in Iraq](#)"). "There were explosions that destroyed buildings dating back to the Assyrian era," Rashid lamented.

Meanwhile Philippe Lalliot, France's ambassador to UNESCO, responded to criticism of the emphasis placed on preserving heritage sites when people are suffering by saying: **"When people die in their tens of thousands, must we be concerned about cultural cleansing? Yes, definitely yes [...] culture is a powerful incentive for dialogue that the most extreme and the most fanatical groups strive to annihilate."**

Chinese submarine on its way to Somalia for anti-piracy patrols

Source:http://www.defenceweb.co.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=36417:chinese-submarine-on-its-way-to-somalia-for-anti-piracy-patrols&catid=108:maritime-security&Itemid=233

China is for the first time sending a submarine to the coast of East Africa to take part in anti-piracy patrols and escort tasks there.

The submarine docked at the port of Sri Lanka's capital Colombo on September 15 on its way to the Gulf of Aden, becoming the first Chinese submarine to visit Sri Lanka.

The vessel that stopped at Colombo International Container Terminal was a diesel electric Type 039 Song class submarine, commissioned in 2006. It is being accompanied by the Type 925 class submarine support vessel Changxingdao, according to IHS Jane's Navy International.

This is not the first time that submarines have been used on anti-piracy deployments. Between August and December 2010 the Dutch Walrus class submarine HNLMS Zeeleeuw joined the NATO anti-piracy task force in the Gulf of Aden and between June and December 2012 the Dutch Navy deployed its submarine HNLMS Bruinvis to the Gulf of Aden.

It is believed that Iran has also used submarines to patrol for pirates in region over the last several years and the United States has also had submarines active off the Somali coast since 2008.

China has deployed anti-piracy task forces to the Gulf of Aden since December 2008 and has escorted 5 670 Chinese and foreign ships and assisted over 60 vessels. Since the first task force arrived off East Africa in January 2009, Chinese navy task forces have been typically rotated every four months.

The 18th People's Liberation Army Navy escort task force set sail for East Africa at the beginning of August. It comprises the amphibious dock landing ship Changbaishan, the



guided missile frigate Yuncheng and the supply ship Chaohu Lake. The task force also includes three helicopters and 100 special operations members.



Apart from keeping a watch for pirates, the Chinese vessels also cooperate with foreign navies. For instance, on September 22 the EU Naval Force flagship, ITS Andrea Doria, met the the CNS Changbaishan in the Gulf of Aden. The EU Force Commander, Rear Admiral Guido Rando, accompanied by the commanding officer of the flagship, Captain Gianfranco Annunziata, and an additional six officers and petty officers,

took the opportunity to visit the commander of the Chinese naval escort task group, Rear Admiral Zhang Chuanshu, on board his flagship.

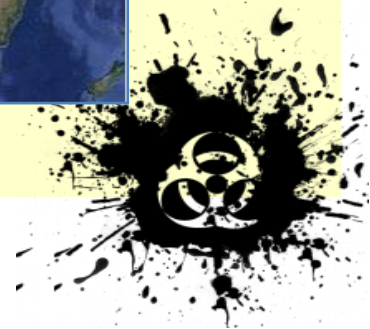
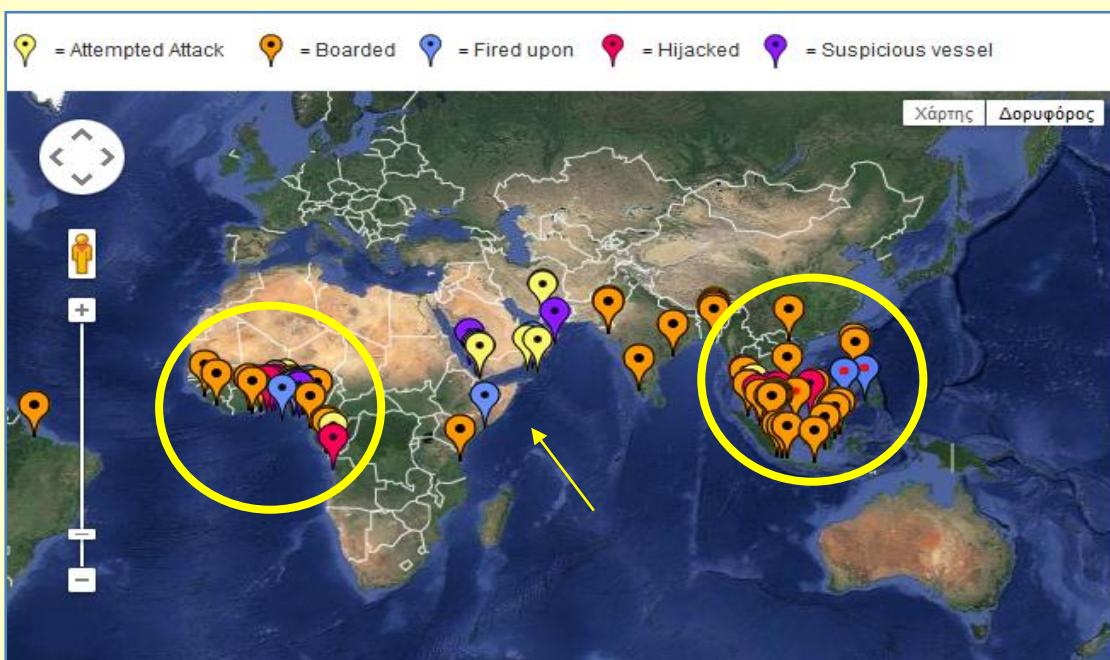
They discussed matters of mutual interests, such as the on-going piracy threat and the importance of coordinating naval activities in the piracy high risk areas, particularly during the inter-monsoon period, when the threat from piracy is increased due to improved weather conditions off the Somali coast, which make it easier for pirates to get out to sea, the EU Naval Force said.

Chinese anti-piracy task forces visit ports in the region, such as in Djibouti, Oman and Yemen, to take on supplies but have also embarked on friendly visits to countries in the area. Earlier this year the 16th escort task group visited eight African countries, including South Africa, after concluding its anti-piracy duties.

The Type 054A missile frigate FFG-546 Yancheng, the Type 053H3 missile frigate FFG-527 Luoyang and the new Type 903 replenishment ship AOE-889 Taihu stopped in Cape Town in June after visiting Tunisia, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Cameroon, Angola and Namibia.

Although warships of the Chinese Navy have been to South Africa before, this was the first time that they had visited the seven other nations. The last occasion was in April 2011, when the 7th Escorting Flotilla paid a goodwill visit to Durban.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Below is the "IMB Piracy and Armed Robbery Map 2014" (taken on Oct 3rd, 2014). **Do you see any real piracy activity excusing the presence of the submarine?** But if you go to China's neighborhood and in West Africa's high seas you will see that problem there is huge. Why don't they go there?



Paris Hilton



Kurdish Mother and Daughter



C'est la vie!



In US War on Islamic State, What Would Victory Look Like?

Source: <http://www.ndtv.com/article/world/in-us-war-on-islamic-state-what-would-victory-look-like-600924>



The United States has yet to explain exactly what victory might look like in its war against the Islamic State group, but it is becoming clear that success will depend heavily on political events in Syria and

Iraq that are beyond its control, experts say.

The US strategy to "destroy" the IS jihadists is predicated on a series of high-stakes gambles that could take years to play out, particularly in Syria, where Washington is betting it can forge a dominant "moderate" rebel force.

The US administration is "recognizing that it is going to take a long time even in the best case scenario," Karl Mueller, senior political scientist at the RAND Corporation think tank, told AFP.

Long haul looms

Despite dramatic images of fighter jets bombing jihadist targets, President Barack Obama and his commanders have warned repeatedly that **Americans should brace themselves for a years-long struggle and that the initial air raids will not produce miracles.**

"I think this is going to be a generational challenge," Obama said this week.

The president and his deputies hope the US-led air strikes in Iraq and Syria will serve as a firewall against the rampaging Sunni militants, buying time to build up local forces and fuel political momentum against the group.

"What our military operations can do is to just check and roll back these networks as they appear and make sure that the time and space is provided for a new way of doing things to begin to take root," Obama said.

Based on rough outlines offered by US officials, the war strategy is counting on defeating IS fighters first in Iraq through a combination of Kurdish forces, Iraqi army troops, Shiite volunteers and a militia or "national guard" of Sunni tribes -- which does not yet exist.

And in Syria, Washington is pinning its hopes on training and arming a new rebel army, at a rate of about 5,000 fighters a year.

At that pace, it will take about three years before the force is big enough to prevail against the IS group, according to the military's top officer, General Martin Dempsey. If the American-trained rebel force could push back the IS group, it might eventually topple the Damascus regime, but officials have not articulated precisely what they have in mind in Syria.

Hoping for change in Iraq

In Iraq, rolling back IS extremists will hinge not on weapons or tactics but on the Shiite-led Baghdad government giving up its sectarian ways and reaching out to the country's alienated Sunni community, analysts said.

Much is riding on Iraq's new Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi, who has yet to signal a dramatic change, said Marina Ottoway, a senior scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center.

"So far, the government has not taken any concrete decisions that could convince Sunnis and Kurds that their interests are now protected," Ottoway wrote in a new paper.

After the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, general David Petraeus, who later became commander there, famously quipped -- "Tell me how this ends."

The plan to vanquish the IS militants at times appears uncertain about "how this ends," but that is partly because the Americans had to act quickly to stop a lightning advance by the jihadists, said Mueller.

"The near term objective is to hold their (IS) advances and prevent the situation from getting worse," he said.

For the longer-term goal, the administration's strategy has an improvisational aspect, he said. "They are, to some extent, playing it by ear."

Despite a myriad of uncertainties, the IS group is not invincible and could be pushed into obscurity if it faced sustained pressure, particularly from Syrians and Iraqis opposed to its brutal ways, some experts said. "If ISIL (IS) suffers big defeats in Iraq in the coming year, as I expect, their strength in Syria may suffer too," said Michael O'Hanlon of the Brookings Institution.



"Just because we can't clearly see an end state shouldn't preclude developing some allies and some leverage," said O'Hanlon, who has criticized Obama for not taking action sooner. The outcome of the campaign will likely come down to politics in Iraq, Syria and among its neighbors, said Ottoway. If the Iraqi government and Syrian opposition leaders fail to rise to the moment and shed

their sectarian, ideological agendas, the US intervention will -- at best -- only slow the IS group's advance, she said.

As with US action in Iraq and Afghanistan over the past decade, she said, "a successful military intervention will be undermined by the hollowness of the political strategy."

EDITOR'S COMMENT: I love these articles as much as I do not like analysts contributing to them. Air Force never won a war – ever! Tomahawks' stockpile is getting short (already). Only boots on the ground win wars! *Elementary my dear Watson!* And of course re-evaluation of enemies and allies!

Read also this article concluding: **"The word "destroy" has a specific meaning. Even if just one ISIS cell remains operational, the overall objective will not have been met."**

What the War with ISIS Teaches Us About Strategy

By Col. S. Clinton Hinote

Source: <http://ciceromagazine.com/features/what-the-war-with-isis-teaches-us-about-strategy/>

Colonel S. Clinton Hinote is a military fellow with the Council on Foreign Relations. He recently commanded the 8th Fighter Wing at Kunsan Air Base, Republic of Korea and served as the U.S. Forces Korea Area VI commander for more than 7,000 Air Force and Army combat ready and forward deployed personnel.

The seeds of failure in Syria and Ukraine were planted long ago

By Kennette Benedict

Source: <http://thebulletin.org/seeds-failure-syria-and-ukraine-were-planted-long-ago7666>



In September the United States, along with European and Middle Eastern partners, deployed air power to destroy the radical forces that are occupying territory on the Iraqi-Syrian border. And in his September 24 speech to the UN General Assembly, US President Barack Obama harshly criticized Moscow for seizing

Ukrainian territory and backing separatists, saying that "we will impose a cost on Russia for aggression."

Though more than 1,000 miles apart, these two foreign policy challenges for the United States have much in common. For the sake of civilians—ordinary people trying to make a living, feed their children, and live with a modicum of dignity—we all hope that efforts to end violent conflict in the Middle East and

Ukraine will succeed. But Washington's approach to both problems is ad-hoc and may be much too late. Without new institutions of regional governance, economic integration, and cultural dialogue, these efforts will likely fail to bring about peace and stability.

By "too late" I mean years and even decades too late.

That's because the two major foreign policy debacles the United States faces today could have been avoided by building new institutions when the opportunity first presented itself at the end of the Cold War.

In the 1990s, though, the US foreign policy community fell into intellectual disarray. The



hostilities between the United States and the Soviet Union had seemed nearly immutable, and ideological positions blinded even intelligent analysts to the need for a far-reaching post-Cold War plan. Very few had been contemplating what would be needed once the USSR collapsed. There were no plans to help build former Soviet societies after years of economic stagnation and environmental neglect, as there had been for Germany and Japan after World War II. Nor were proposals for international cooperation to prevent future schisms and new “cold wars” given much thought. The national security and foreign policy establishments in the United States and Europe did not undertake any thoroughgoing reviews or take seriously any new ideas that went beyond the already-existing United Nations.

Globalization was recognized as a force that would reshape the international system of politics, economics, and culture. But the “triumph” of the United States over the Soviet Union, coupled with a new emphasis in the United States on the supposed magic of the markets and “government as the problem,” led many leaders in the late 1980s to shy away from proposing grander plans that would draw former Soviet countries into closer cooperation with the West. Half-hearted offers of technical assistance were made, and private philanthropy had a role in building civil society in some eastern European countries. But by and large, possibilities for international institution-building were ignored, and societies in shock were left to fend for themselves. Russia was left to its own devices in the belief that economic globalization would take care of its many problems.

With even less care and thought, the West led an expansion of NATO to include countries that had once been in the orbit of the Soviet Union. Rather than responding positively to Mikhail Gorbachev’s plea to unite with Russia in a common European home, Europe and the United States gave Russia the cold shoulder, as they had done to Germany after World War I, when they took actions that helped lead to the rise of the Third Reich. Had the West taken Gorbachev’s suggestion seriously, we might have seen Russia become embedded in a web of economic, legal, and cultural relations as the European Union deepened its community of nations over the 1990s and 2000s.

The United States, the remaining superpower, did not bother to consolidate its position with new institutions of law and regional cooperation in Eastern Europe. Nor did it seek to help build cooperation in the Middle East, where the US and the Soviet Union had been competitors. Rather, US political leaders proposed a military doctrine based on overwhelming force and global strike capability. And they believed so deeply in the triumph of a market-based economic system that they even dismantled their own regulatory bodies, including those regulating financial institutions, in a misguided effort to make the United States more competitive in the global market.

The result, as we now know from the financial meltdown of 2008, was disastrous. Just as the belief in centrally-controlled economies led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, the belief that market economics could conquer all ills led to the near collapse of the world economy. In fact, it was only government institutions and political leadership that prevented the complete ruin of the US economy.

In short, in the economic sphere as in political and military relations, the West and the United States in particular have turned away from institution building. The result is disruption and disorder, abetted by arms sales, ending in mob rule in parts of the Middle East and even Ukraine. It was almost pathetic to see President Obama desperately trying to persuade countries in the Middle East to respond to the violent challenge of the Islamic State group in a “coalition of the willing.” Had the United States and its allies helped build legal and political institutions of cooperation with countries in that region, as Western Europe did after World War II in the form of the European Economic Community and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), it would not have to flail around trying to collect partners for military action in efforts that are too little, too late. If it had built such institutions in Eastern Europe and with the former Soviet Union, it is unlikely that the United States and its allies would be facing a newly belligerent Russia in the conflict over Ukraine.

Securing future peace requires reducing fear, building trust, and inventing predictable processes that encourage cooperation to solve problems. This is the work of institutions—of rules, norms, and regulations—that can ensure fair treatment and



stable relations. In Washington, though, the intellectual disarray continues, alternating between blandishments to lead with military force, to encourage civil society organizations, or to open markets to the global economy. It's not fashionable to talk about government or institutions as solutions to contemporary problems. Few acknowledge the importance of

rules and regulations, of routine and the application of common standards to a well-functioning society. But today's worries about disorder and violence may be indications that laissez-faire foreign policy, like laissez-faire economics, is not enough on its own to prevent increasing violence and chaos in our global neighborhood.

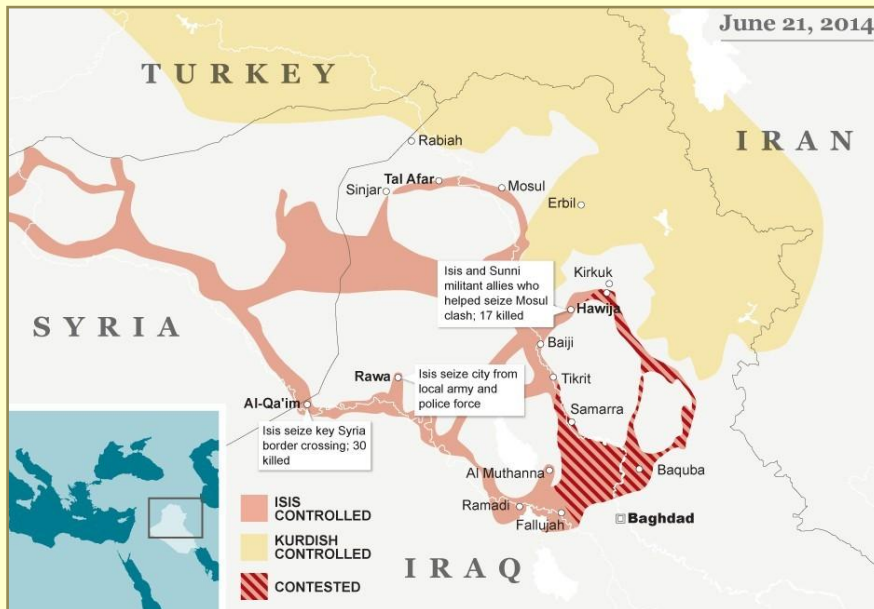
Kennette Benedict came to the Bulletin from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, where she directed the international peace and security program from 1992 to 2005. She also established and directed the foundation's initiative in the former Soviet Union from 1992 to 2002. Before joining the foundation in 1987, she taught at Rutgers University (1980-1981) and at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (1981-1985). Benedict received her A.B. from Oberlin College and a PhD in political science from Stanford University. Her media appearances include interviews on ABC's 20/20, CNN, CNN International, BBC, CBC, NPR, CTV, Voice of America, Fox News Channel, Agence Presse-France, and Al Jazeera. She has been quoted in USA Today, the Chicago Tribune, Village Voice, Los Angeles Times, and Congressional Quarterly, among others. She appears regularly on radio news and talk shows in the United States, Britain, and Australia.

Who will fill the ISIS vacuum?

Source: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/7408/19/Who-will-fill-the-ISIS-vacuum.aspx>

The war on IS cannot succeed without ground troops, but of what kind, asks Bassel Oudat in Damascus.

gained another bargaining chip in any future political settlement. And if the opposition is in a position to replace IS, then it will have consolidated its position in post-regime Syria.



The aerial campaign by a coalition of international and Arab forces against Islamic State (IS) forces in Syria will have lasting repercussions on Syria and the region, as when the IS forces withdraw, other forces will need to step in and fill the vacuum. If the regime led by Syrian President Bashar Al-Assad is allowed to play this role, it will have

The question of who is to replace IS is high on the regime's mind as well as on that of the opposition. The answer, while being affected by the coalition's current military tactics, will most likely shape the country's future. For over 10 days, the coalition has rained rockets and

missiles on the headquarters, roadblocks, and buildings held by IS. Collateral damage among civilians in Syria has been extensive, according to opposition sources.

One thing that has particularly worried the opposition is that the coalition while avoiding any attacks on the regime has



attacked other Islamist-leaning groups that have been fighting the regime for the past three years.

The Al-Nusra Front in particular came under fire from the coalition, but even potentially “moderate” Islamists also felt the heat.

The lack of coordination between the coalition and the opposition has been such that even the Western-backed Free Syrian Army (FSA) has had to vacate positions close to those of IS, for fear of being targeted.

Observers have noted that in many cases so far it has been the Syrian regular army that has advanced into the positions vacated by IS, which means that the main loser in the current battle is the opposition.

While the strikes have led to dozens of deaths among civilians, IS has refrained from reporting its losses. Since the strikes began, IS fighters have donned civilian attire and are hiding in residential areas.

It is unlikely; therefore, that the coalition campaign has degraded IS to any substantial extent. This is perhaps why even US officials admit that eliminating the extremist group may take years.

FSA leader Asaad Ayyubi is worried that IS may simply regroup as soon as the current campaign comes to an end. Speaking to Al-Ahram Weekly, Ayyubi said he was “confident that IS hasn’t suffered extensive damage. This is because the group has carried out certain precautions, including shifting its offices and positions.”

“Unless there is ground support, the outcome of the aerial campaign will remain limited and IS will survive,” Ayyubi said. IS fighters were “concealing their presence, changing their clothes, and blending into the local community by moving into residential areas,” he added.

“It will be impossible to hunt them down without ground troops,” he said, also voicing concerns at coordination between the coalition and the Syrian regime.

Haytham Manna, a respected member of the opposition, is pessimistic about the future of the current campaign, saying that the porous borders between Syria and Iraq were providing IS with an endless supply of recruits.

“Remember Yemen. The more attacks were waged on Al-Qaeda there, the more the latter expanded,” he said.

Senior US officials are also convinced that the aerial campaign alone cannot finish the job. Martin Dempsey, chair of the US Joint Chiefs

of Staff, has spoken of the need for non-US ground troops to go after IS, with perhaps 15,000 being needed for this task.

Other American officials, including Daniel Rubenstein, the US special envoy to Syria, have said that the US needs partners from the “moderate opposition” to help it out.

However, this poses more questions than it answers. It is not clear who in Syria is now regarded as the “moderate opposition” by the Americans. While the latter say they have plans to train and equip the “moderates,” these plans seem to be for the long-run, while the current campaign may turn out to be limited in time and scope.

If the Americans have a partner in this aerial campaign, this has turned out to be the Syrian regime.

When IS positions are bombed, the Free Syrian Army and other armed opposition groups besieging these positions quickly pull out for fear of coming under fire. By contrast, the Syrian regime has wasted no time in moving into the positions vacated by either IS or the opposition.

During the first week of the coalition operations, IS was believed to have vacated nearly 50 villages in northern Syria. These villages have since been retaken by the Syrian army.

Finding itself at the receiving end of US missiles, the Al-Nusra Front is said to have taken the side of the IS in the current confrontation, which if true may lead to further complications for the country.

Mohannad Al-Hosni, president of the Syrian Organisation for Human Rights, an NGO, is furious at what he considers to be “cooperation between the regime and the US”.

Speaking to the Weekly, Al-Hosni said that the Syrian regime was the “primary and sole” beneficiary of the aerial campaign and that it had begun to impose its control on the areas vacated by the armed opposition, suggesting that de facto coordination is emerging between the US and the regime.

For all the US rhetoric about Al-Assad having lost his credibility and being unfit as a US partner, the Americans were actually handing the Syrian president an opportunity to emerge as victorious in the confrontation with the opposition, he said.

This will not have been the first time the Americans have said one thing and done the opposite. US



President Barack Obama's "red line" statement about the use of chemical weapons didn't survive Al-Assad's offer to dispose of his country's reserves of such weapons, for example.

Abdel Qader Al-Laz, former director of the Syrian Police Academy and an outspoken critic of the regime, said that "the chaos that is now happening is the result of the Al-Assad regime's misrepresentation of the facts. The regime claims that what is happening in Syria is not a people's revolution but acts of extremism and

sabotage," which was far from being the case.

According to Al-Laz, the opposition was now at the receiving end not only of fire from the regime or IS, but also from the coalition as well. Yet, thousands of former army and police officers, all of whom were well-trained and disciplined, could be called upon to fight IS and the regime, he said.

"There are thousands of trained servicemen who have defected from the regime, and these are now sitting on the sidelines and can be relied upon," Al-Laz pointed out.

Fishing Without Nets Examines a Hijacking From the Somali Pirates' POV

Source: <http://www.ocweekly.com/2014-10-02/film/fishing-without-nets-cutter-hodierne/>



Alex Disenhof

Perhaps the most frightening thing about blockbuster thrillers and action films is their purposeful lack of empathy, their reliance on faceless others whose deaths—comic and exhilarating—allow the heroes to bond and grow and find their smiles or whatever. A studio film such as Richard Fleischer's *The Boston Strangler*, which devoted its final third to the killer's post-arrest therapy, would be even more surprising today than it was in '68. That explains some of the hosannas that greeted Paul Greengrass' Somali pirate thriller *Captain Phillips* last year. Stylishly shaky in camerawork but no great shakes as drama, the movie distinguished itself by daring to look beyond good guys and bad guys and remind us that its antagonists are people. It's not excusing their actions to acknowledge that global poverty has more to do with piracy than, say, inherent black-hatted evilness.

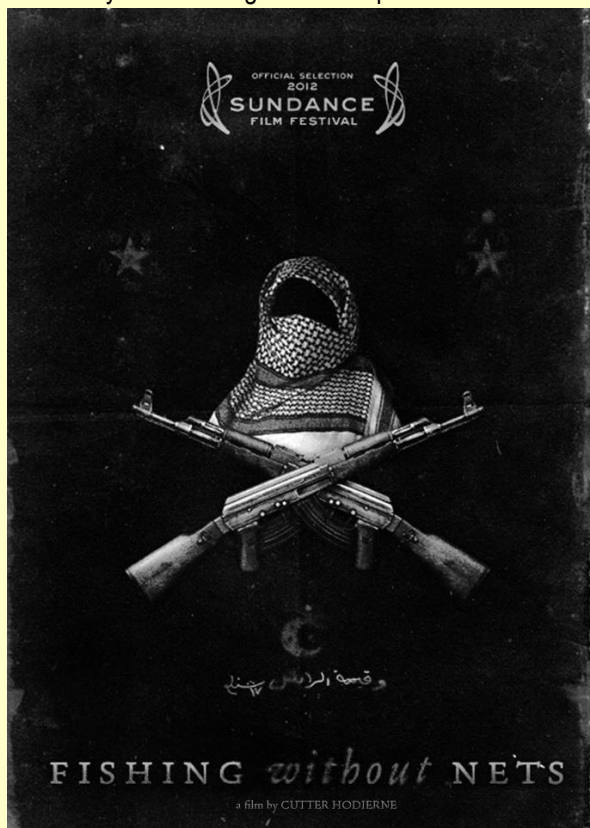
Now Cutter Hodierna's gorgeous, harrowing debut feature, *Fishing Without Nets*, goes further. Rather than asking you to feel a bit for the pirates, Hodierna's film puts you in their shoes. Again and again, the camera bobs behind uncertain Abdi (Abdikani Muktar), a Somali fisherman/husband/father/nice guy, as he journeys deeper into places he probably shouldn't: a ramshackle pirate camp, a foreign oil tanker, at times into wide and empty expanses of ocean and desert.

When we meet him, Abdi is still trying to fish an ocean that has been poisoned so he can feed a child in a shanty of a country that offers no opportunities. Abdi's skills with a boat bring him to the attention of local pirates, who finally prevail upon him to send his wife and child off to a safe house and sign on for a raid out in the nearest shipping routes—and the possibly grand payday to follow. How else can he care for his family? But worry pinches his easy smile: This isn't what his father raised him to be.



Fishing Without Nets was directed by Cutter Hodierna; written by Cutter Hodierna, John Hibey and David Burkman; and stars Abdikani Muktar, Abdi Siad, Abdulwhali Faarah, Abdikhadir Hassan, Reda Kateb and Idil Ibrahim.

What follows isn't especially violent, but it is raw and upsetting, even with Hodierna's eye for seascapes or the way sweat can glisten as it pools in the clavicles. The perspective sticks mostly with the pirates



during the protracted hostage negotiations, but Abdi shares a few affecting moments with a captive Frenchman (Reda Kateb). Even the scenes of imprisonment—and of pirates shouting and pointing crusty old AK-47s—stir complex feeling: The Frenchman and Abdi play checkers with bottle caps on a grid of hand-scribbled plywood. Even the prisoner's heart seems to be breaking. (He's figured out that he's of no value to these guys dead or even wounded.) The pirates, meanwhile, prefer a grimmer game: competing to be the quickest to jam a cartridge into a gun and get the nozzle pointed at someone else. It's at once a contest, a practical skill and a terrifying admission that, in their world, there's no other skill that matters.

Most of the film plays like a pirate procedural—an ordinary ship-taking, rather than a singular one. But dissatisfaction among the Somalis eventually leads to terrible complications and, of all things, a curiously beautiful adventure-film ending. The final shots boast some existential man-vs.-nature grandeur, but never anything like

grandiosity, and they will leave audiences sifting the implications: **Does this powerful film have a happy ending? Is one even possible?**

Poll: Half of Americans think terror attack likely; majority support airstrikes

Source: <http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/article/20141002/NEWS08/310020081/Poll-Half-think-U-S-high-risk-terror-attack>



October 02 – **Half of Americans think there's a high risk of a terrorist attack on U.S. soil, yet only a third are closely following news of U.S. airstrikes against Islamic extremists in the Middle East.**

Most people do think the airstrikes are a good idea. Two-thirds of those questioned for an Associated Press-GfK poll say they favor the offensive by the U.S. and allies. And, despite, more than a decade of costly war, about one-third favor going beyond that and putting American military boots on the ground in Iraq or Syria.

President Obama says he has no plans to send ground troops to either country. A little more than a third say they are opposed to the idea, and about one in four say they neither favor nor oppose it.

That's thousands of miles away. What about concern at home?

According to the poll, most think there's a high risk of a terrorist attack inside the United States, 53 percent, though just 20 percent call it an "extremely high risk." An additional 32 percent say the nation is at moderate risk of a terrorist attack and 12 percent say it faces a low risk of terror attacks.



The poll has not asked that specific question in the past. However, the finding tracks with Pew Research Center data from July indicating that concern had ebbed somewhat since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.

This summer, the Pew survey said 59 percent of Americans were “very” or “somewhat worried” that there would soon be another terrorist attack in the United States. That’s lower than the 73 percent that Pew found were concerned, following 9/11, that another attack was imminent and about the same as the 58 percent who were worried about another attack after the April 2013 Boston Marathon bombing. There hasn’t been a massive terrorist attack on U.S. soil since 9/11.

Those in the AP-GfK survey are split on whether they approve of the way Obama is handling the threat from terrorism and specifically the threat posed by the Islamic State group. About half approve and about half disapprove of Obama’s actions to confront the threat. Still, those figures are better than Obama’s approval ratings for handling top domestic issues. Just 40 percent approve of his handling of the economy, 41 percent approve of his work on health care and 34 percent approve of the way he’s handling immigration.

Douglas Dowden, 49, a native of San Diego who now lives in central California, said he thinks the threat from the Islamic State group is overblown. He doesn’t support Obama’s decision to launch airstrikes.

“How many terror threat attacks happen in countries like say Spain, Italy, the U.S.? It’s not that often. I have more fear of what some whack job locally is going to do — that’s more of a concern to me than some potential threat from some extremist group,” Dowden said.

Dowden is among the 37 percent surveyed who said they were following news about the airstrikes “somewhat closely.” About 32 percent of those surveyed are paying close attention to the military action, and 30 percent say they’re barely monitoring the U.S. military action.

“I’m really not following it. There is so much terrible news and I’d rather follow the domestic news than the foreign news — but I still am interested in what’s going on,” said Betty Masket, a 91-year-old retired government health science administrator from Chevy Chase, Maryland. “I really feel sorry for Obama. I think he’s doing the best he can.”

Keith Fehser, 55, a commodities trader from suburban Chicago, says Americans need to see terrorism as an extremely important issue, yet they don’t.

“I just think it’s only going to get worse,” Fehser said. “Even though the government tries its best to keep on top of it, it’s just lunacy out there with what can be done by just small groups of people.”

He said most people he talks with don’t care much about the U.S. airstrikes on Iraq and Syria. “It’s a long way away. As long as we’re not letting our own people get killed, I don’t think they care that much,” he said, adding that he would be “very disgusted” if American combat troops were sent back to the region.

The AP-GfK Poll was conducted Sept. 25-29, 2014, using KnowledgePanel, GfK’s probability-based panel designed to be representative of the U.S. population. **It involved online interviews with 1,845 adults, and has a margin of sampling error of plus or minus 2.5 percentage points for all respondents.** Respondents were selected randomly using phone or mail survey methods, and later interviewed. People selected for KnowledgePanel who didn’t otherwise have access to the Internet were given free access.

EDITOR’S COMMENT: Less than 2,000 people in a country of more than 300 mil is a very small sampe to evoke conclusions. Also the level of knowledge of Americans regarding what is going on away from their States is known, disappointing and (mostly) mass media regulated. What might be a more general concept is the fact that people in this big country would like to have their money spent for them and their governance to care for them in amore direct way and provide solutions to homeland daily problems – i.e. poverty, violanece etc. **Statistics is a weapon of mass disseption!**

Certificate in Terrorism Studies Outline

By Phil Wood MBE MSc CPP PSP FSyl MInstLM AMBCI

Source: <http://buckssecurity.wordpress.com/2014/10/04/certificate-in-terrorism-studies-outline/>



Terrorism and the threat of mass casualty attacks permeate the psyche of modern society. The global threat from terrorism, if recent



experience is a reliable indicator, remains prevalent and a constant preoccupation for governments, security agencies and corporate security managers. The reason that terrorism is effective as a viable weapon is that it exploits the victim's fear of it as a credible threat; also the fact that its methodology is constantly changing and evolving. The resulting challenge for potential victims or target organisations is to anticipate the threat and its potential to become a specific risk to them and to plan and implement mitigation strategies to ensure that protection of their assets is optimised. This programme is designed to dispel myths and provide a unique challenge for its



students.

There are many organisations and agencies in both public and private sectors who have an interest in protecting against terrorism and in understanding why terrorists attack particular types of target. By developing an understanding of the motivators and facilitators for terrorism, potential targets and organisations will be better equipped to put in place protection.

This programme aims to provide students with an academically rigorous and work-related programme.

The outlined learning outcomes for this Certificate are considered to be essential for those who have an interest in terrorism. These include:

- 1 Terrorism motivations and the spread of activity globally
- 2 The profiles and behaviours of targets
- 3 The facilitators of terrorist activity
- 4 Geo-political implications of terrorism-related decision making
- 5 Threat and Risk Assessment
- 6 Anticipation, response and recovery in the dynamic context

This certificate sets a new standard in its treatment of the dynamic and complicated subject of terrorism. There is a wide and extensive range of resources and

programmes, some of which conflict with each other, and can be confusing to researchers and students. In addition, many programmes

which discuss terrorism are either superficial in depth or content or concentrate on effect rather than cause and developments. This programme aims to provide students with the relevant knowledge and intellectual stimulus to understand the motivations of and theories for protection against, terrorist activity.

This programme is designed to provide essential underpinning critical analysis, theoretical approaches and knowledge for those employed or looking to develop a career in subject-related disciplines.

The range of partners in course development, design and delivery and the involvement of security and counter-terrorist expertise from industry and other agencies will also prove attractive to those candidates with aspirations to succeed at the highest levels in an area of postgraduate qualification which is currently under-represented in this for in many HE institutions.

The course is designed for:

- ✓ Those with an academic or research interest in the causes, effects and mitigation of terrorist activity.
- ✓ Individuals who have experience in anti and counter-terrorism planning or wish to become specialists in those areas.
- ✓ Law enforcement, government and military personnel who require an in depth study of terrorism and its motivating factors
- ✓ Security and planning consultants.

Typically, holders of this Certificate will be able to:



Critically evaluate the development of rationales and viewpoints of individuals and organised bodies which have turned to terrorism as a means of achieving their aims.

Analyse and evaluate threats from existing, new and future terrorist activity through assessment and examination of potential target profiles and terrorism motivators

Synthesise, apply and critically appraise a range of strategies for responding to the terrorist threat against society at large and organisations in particular, both now and in the future.

Apply concepts and principles of strategic analysis, assessment, planning and consultation to deliver terrorism-orientated protection capability in a variety of scenarios.

In line with the innovative nature of this programme, the supporting assessment strategy uses a blend of assessment methods.

Evidence of the achievement of the learning outcomes will be in the form of:

- Written and practical assignments
- Participation in discussions and scenario exercises
- A project of around 10,000 words (with 10% tolerance).

Both formative and summative assessment methods will be used throughout this programme. Formative assessment creates a point for both students and tutors from which to appraise development, consolidate learning and to plan ahead. Summative assessment allows recognition for progression to further study, informs those involved of the level of achievement, and validates the learning process.

This course examines trends and anticipates developments in terrorist methodology and attack routines alongside the potential exposure of various target types which may not have previously been considered. It will include:

- Recent trends in terrorist activity
- Potential trends in terrorist activity
- The existence of targets and their exposure potential
- The nation-state discredited and legitimised as a target
- Expedients for future terrorist activity
- Exploitation and the target continuum
- Potential targets for the future. Stasis, reversion and innovation.

Adaptation and development of attack methodology allows terrorists to retain the initiative, which if unchecked, has the potential to allow them to conduct repeated and increasingly damaging operations. This course covers the need to meet the changing and unpredictable nature of the terrorist threat and the ability, or inability, of target organisations to protect themselves by applying mitigation and response methodologies. It will evaluate the reasons why security management and organisations should consider attack predictability and impact and consider the response capabilities which have been used in the past in addition to considering what may be needed in the future.

There are various ideological motivations for terrorism, and a wide range of attack methodologies have been developed and used in the past with a degree of invention and initiative to outstrip the counterterrorist and anti-terrorist activities of governments and law enforcement – and in theatres of conflict the military.

- The 'cycle of terror' – attack/respond/reconfigure/attack.
- Freedom of thought processes and looking beyond experience.

The **course team** maintains constant monitoring and update of the world political situation as it affects security and resilience issues. We consider that the ever-changing dynamic of world politics has a direct effect upon all aspects of societal life; and particularly in the areas of security, defence and politics. Therefore, we maintain currency of knowledge and research in areas where there are particular concerns and also in those where there is potential growth for various national expansionist activities and the development of proxy groupings to support those activities in the short and long-term. It is within our personal and academic remit and



TERRORISM



terms of reference – in fact a prescribed duty – to ensure that we remain fully conversant with the requirements of research, currency and required associated activities. Only in this way will we be able to deliver a dynamic and client related programme which will provide the detail and currency to allow flexibility and capability. As with all of our programmes, all of the case studies will be substituted and the focus of study reoriented where necessary in the light of emerging examples or new realignments of political and proxy organisations which become apparent throughout the course of study.

Terrorism is designed to have consequential effect well beyond the point of impact in terms of time, and political and ideological result. The effective use of terrorism can cause significant geopolitical effect, 9/11 being a cogent case study which led to the Iraq and Afghanistan interventions and to further terrorism cycles within the past decade. There are significant consequential effects where military power is used in response to terrorist activity, potentially when there is collateral damage to infrastructure and to populations.

HOW WILL THEY HIT US NEXT?

Terrorism costs the world billions of dollars every year. Terrorists use explosives 54% of the time, and firearms 35% of the time. This means 89% of all terrorist attacks involve a bomb or armed assault. 11% of attacks involve kidnapping, assassination, or arson. Do you think you are prepared to protect yourself and your entire family from danger? Being aware of threats is just the beginning. Remember to stockpile your supplies and keep a watchful eye on yourself and the world.

www.CheaperThanDirt.net Source: RAND Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents | www.rand.org

Responses to terrorism can be difficult to manage and can soon run out of control. The construction of false narratives concerning domestic threat are a particular bone of contention and there have been significant political fallouts for political leaders when dealing with the balancing requirement to respond to terrorism and to ensure the human rights of populations who may not be directly implicated in terrorist activity but may be subject to fear as a dehumanising agent. Significant terrorist attacks can cause governments to abandon restraint or at least succumb to the temptation to respond in a significantly violent manner which can negate the effectiveness and perception of the nation-state as the moral high ground holder.

In many Western countries there is significant antipathy towards Muslim communities as a result of Islamist terrorist activity. This is illustrative of a type of consequential effect which is disproportionate to the amount of casualties that terrorism actually causes to the majority of populations. Terrorism poses a negligible risk to the vast majority of civilian populations, although there will be a different focus in expeditionary operations and overseas territories, where the situation may be far more dynamic and different. The short and long-term effects of activity overseas on domestic counter and anti-terror stances will be an area of developing interest.

Terrorism is a fully effective asymmetric warfare methodology which has the capability to cause implications in all aspects of life from the imposition of security measures for holidaymakers, to increased surveillance, to the involvement of governments in overseas conflicts, to the transformation of large events such as the Olympics into a major security event. It has contributed to a change in the landscape concerning physical design of buildings, the ability of organisations and individuals to respond, and also a perhaps



justified worry that surveillance activities which may be carried out against terrorist activities can be used by the state to impinge upon human rights and freedoms which should be enjoyed by the majority. It is safe to assume that international terrorism can operate across boundaries and with technological developments now the misnomer of cyber terrorism is perhaps the next route to be taken. Importantly, even with cyber terrorism where the effects may be on IT systems, the consequential results could be extremely disruptive and in some cases fatal – having parallel effects to those which may be caused by natural disasters in some cases (logistics disruption and infrastructure stoppage).

► Contact Phil Wood at pwood01@bucks.ac.uk if you would like to be added to program's interest list for a proposed 2015 start.

How to Survive a Terrorist Attack: Active Shooter Scenarios

By Michele Rigby

Source: <http://femininecollective.com/survive-terrorist-attack-active-shooter-scenarios/>



The tragic deaths of six young Americans at the hands of a crazed classmate in California and the deaths of three people at a Jewish Center in Brussels, Belgium this last week remind us that we live in a very dangerous world. Because there are so many terrorist attacks and active shooter scenarios, I often get asked, “What should I do if, God forbid, I find myself in the middle of an attack?” It’s the key question that the media rarely hones in on: How did the survivors survive??? That’s what we all want to know. If there’s a chance, how do we ensure that we react the best way possible in such a confusing and chaotic situation?

As a former CIA counterterrorism officer, I have dissected terrorist attacks to find clues for how I might survive such an incident. It was personal for me as several friends and former colleagues of mine were caught in the line of fire: Some were lucky enough to have survived unscathed, some were injured, and a couple of my friends died. Being prepared cost me nothing. Educating myself was one way I could take back control over parts of my life over which I had little.

Lesson #1: Duck and cover. Get your head down and get behind something ... anything. Expand your idea of places that you might hide in or behind: a car, garbage can, display tables in malls, restaurant booths, restrooms, stairwells, etc. There are many possibilities that you might not consider in the heat of the moment, so brainstorm good hiding places in locations that you frequent.

This was particularly difficult for the victims of the **al-Shabaab attack on the Westgate Shopping Mall in Nairobi, Kenya last September** who were initially unable to exit the building. One woman in the mall who felt cornered was able to crawl inside an air conditioning duct which she emerged from safely the next day. Dozens of shoppers spent much of the first day holed up in a restroom (remember, it doesn’t matter whether it’s a men’s or women’s restroom—you go wherever you need to avoid coming into contact with the attackers). At certain points, the group could hear the attackers walking back and forth outside the door shooting and killing people.

The group was later found and ushered to safety by Kenyan counterterrorism forces.

Lesson #2: Once you’re behind cover, try to assess what is happening—i.e. where are the perpetrators, how many are there, and what are they doing? Once you ensure you are not in the direct line of fire, get off of the “X” which means that you need to run—in the right direction. This might sound obvious, but when you are in shock, it can be difficult to figure out where the bad guys are or how to reach safety. During the **2008 attack by Lashkar-e-Tayyiba on numerous public spaces in Mumbai, India**, there was incredible confusion about the number of attackers as they assaulted and moved quickly between multiple locations including two well-known hotels, a major train station, Jewish center, hospital, and police stations. This complex attack took place over a period of three days and was executed by 10 terrorists. Several unlucky individuals ran right into the terrorists as they tried to flee the violence. They were killed by



gunmen who were transitioning from one attack site to another. Separately, a tourist who had been staying in one of the luxury hotels heard commotion in the hallway. He glanced out his

that particular direction. Listen to your brain's supercomputer—i.e. your “gut” because it is vastly more knowledgeable and reliable than you know.

“Chaos, panic and fear can only be minimized - never eliminated - when it is preceded by preparation and planning.”

door to see a terrorist shooting other hotel guests. He immediately closed and locked the door, and then shoved a large desk in front of it. He could hear explosions occurring and shooting taking place from what seemed like every direction. Later, he realized he could gather intelligence from his daughter over the phone and from CNN on the TV before trying to make an escape from the hotel. He was able to do so the next day when he was fairly certain the terrorists were not in the immediate vicinity.

Lesson #3: Sometimes your intuition (your subconscious processing) is more keyed in than you can comprehend. Listen to it.

American citizen Elaine Dang was very lucky to have survived the chaotic **Westgate Mall attack in Nairobi, Kenya that took place over the course of three days in September 2013**. When she told her story to CNN, she noted that at first, everyone began to run to the parking lot. Dang started to follow, but then she decided to go the other direction. She explained, “My instinct said, don’t go with the crowd, move away from the crowd because the crowd is going to be the most vulnerable place. And so I actually moved away and hid behind one of the silver kitchen counters.” It’s a good thing she listened to her gut because the attackers were coming from the parking garage and into the area where she and scores of shoppers had gathered for a cooking show. If she had proceeded per the original plan, she would have run straight into the attackers. Dang’s intuition may have been fed by bits of data processed at lightening speed by her brain—outside of her consciousness—which suggested the attack was being launched from

Lesson #4: Do what you can to be calm and stay focused.

Per a riveting 60 Minutes interview with three of the five Americans that survived **al-Qa’ida’s four-day long attack on a BP gas plant in Algeria in January 2013**—the three men kept cool despite the surge of terror they were experiencing. One man was on the bus that was the first thing to come under attack. He said that everyone on the bus quickly but calmly laid down on the floor—as flat as possible—as hundreds of rounds were pumped into the bus. Somehow, he and others lived through this hail of gunfire, and Algerian forces eventually came to their rescue and fought off the attackers.

The most senior American at the site was carefully hid by his staff behind a large filing cabinet. He sat motionless, barely allowing himself to breathe, as he heard the terrorists walk the halls and break down other doors looking for hostages. Remarkably, that office turned out to be one of only two that the terrorists did not search. The third American also hid in his office, underneath the most concealed portion of his desk where he stayed for two days. It was his

extreme efforts to remain calm and motionless that helped him evade detection. He and a couple of other employees were eventually able to escape from the building and make it to safety by running through the desert to a nearby Algerian military base.

Elaine Dang kept her wits despite being in the eye of the storm. She survived the Nairobi attack by running the right way at first and then later relocating, as needed, until she could make it to safety. After she took cover the first time, Dang saw a friend stand up and raise his arms, as if to surrender. She



prepared to do the same, but before Dang could stand up, another woman did. That woman was summarily executed. After a gas canister blew up near where she was hiding, Dang ran to another counter. There she laid next to a couple that had been shot and

pretended to be dead. Later, when the coast was clear, she followed other victims out of the mall through a different exit to safety. **Do not be one of the people that freezes and is overcome by fear—you need to move smartly if you want to survive.**

Other Helpful Hints:

- Shooting rarely ever sounds like you think it will. Unless very large caliber weapons are used, people usually mistake gunshots for firecrackers or “popping” sounds.
- Remember that in malls, many stores have back rooms where they keep inventory, trash receptacles and secondary exits which you may be able to use to escape. Also, don’t forget that parking garages and fire exits are excellent exit points if you are able to get there safely.
- There are rarely as many attackers as it appears in these complex, active shooter events. Terrorists have been very proficient at making it seem like they are greater in number by using grenades, IEDs, fires, and other diversions that distract and confuse bystanders and authorities.

After obtaining a masters degree in Arab Studies at Georgetown University, Michele Rigby applied—along with hundreds of others from the university—to work for the CIA. After a long and grueling hiring process and a year of intensive training, she became an intelligence officer for the National Clandestine Service, the covert (operational) arm of the Agency. Serving for a decade as a counterterrorism officer, Michele worked in all of the awful places you hope you’ll never visit, including Iraq during the height of the war. To date, Michele has traveled to 45 countries, lived in six of those, and has a lot of crazy stories to tell about life overseas. While working for the CIA, Michele initially decried the traits that made her different from senior male officers, but later realized that these traits were what made her a great intelligence officer (empathy, intuition, strong interpersonal skills). Now she’s on a mission to show women that they have the elements to be a Femme Fatale—the incredibly intelligent and operationally astute woman that gets stuff done. After years of service to her country, Michele has left the undercover life behind and now works as an international management consultant focused on Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. She has a more “normal” life now and a lot more time to do the things she loves: writing, cooking, traveling for pleasure, walking on the beach—and most of all, inspiring others!

Belgium: At least ten jihadis found working at Brussels national airport

Source: <https://pamelageller.com/2014/10/belgium-at-least-ten-jihadis-found-working-at-brussels-national-airport.html/>



The denial is breathtaking. The sharia-compliant national security policies that allow for such frightening and dangerous lapses are suicidal. And rest assured: when the worst occurs, ideology won’t be blamed. Jihadic doctrine won’t be blamed. Dhimmitude and submission won’t be blamed. The Muslim community and their leftist lapdogs will blame US airstrikes, just as they are being blamed in the beheading of Alan Henning.



Belgian intelligence service recently discovered 10 jihadi working at our national airport. With access badges to go near the planes on the tarmac and the luggage. Makes you feel safe next time you depart from Brussels. A number of them left to fight in Syria.

The security services have discovered that the last few months at least ten potential Syrian jihadists had a job in the baggage handling at the airport of Zaventem. Some were even in possession of a badge which they were allowed to come. Aircraft until shortly "After analysis, we decided that a dozen of these servants no longer met the safety requirements," it sounds to the airport. "It was then decided to withdraw. Their badge "

Some of them are also effective left for Syria. At least one employee was arrested after his return to Brussels. The question is how that candidate jihadists get up on the tarmac of airports. "The criminal does not automatically sends out an alarm when someone applies for a job at the airport," said a security officer. "Not every sentence should be, after all, associated with terrorism. **But we have learned our lesson.** Meanwhile, the substantially increased vigilance. "

Have they really learned their lesson?

EDITOR'S COMMENT: No they have not learned their lesson! Because they continue to think that "it will not happen to them; their service; their organization; their neighborhood; their nation!" How difficult is to perform a background check? How difficult is to establish a team observing behaviors of people working into critical infrastructure? How difficult is to stop confusing "privacy", "rights" and "security"? No difficult at all! What is really difficult is brain transplantation or mindset transfusion. Science does not have all the answers. Yet!

Note: People with upper respiratory allergies (allergic rhinitis or "hay fever") suffering for many years have some visible characteristics on their "allergy faces" – i.e. "nasal crease" or "allergic salute" to name a few. Do you know that people praying 5 times a day for many years finally have a distinctive print into their forehead? Not highly visible but it is there if you notice and know what to look for.



Allergic salute



Nasal crease



Pray sign

Turkey traded UK fighters in swap with ISIS

Source: <http://english.alarabiya.net/en/News/2014/10/06/Report-Turkey-traded-UK-fighters-in-swap-with-ISIS.html>

Two British extremists are allegedly among 180 rebel prisoners handed back to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) by Turkey in return for the release of diplomats held by the group, UK daily The Times reported on Monday.

According to the newspaper, British counter-terrorism officers have begun to investigate Shabazz Suleman, 18, a grammar school pupil, and Hisham Folkard, 26, two British citizens who are believed to have joined ISIS.

Last month, 46 Turkish consular staff and three Iraqis who were seized by ISIS in Iraq were freed and returned home, ending Turkey's most serious hostage crisis in recent years.

The two men were among 10 European Union citizens on a leaked list of names obtained by The Times.

The report from The Times is "credible," UK government officials told the BBC.



Limited knowledge

Folkard's father, a Roman Catholic who asked to remain anonymous, told The Times that he had not been in contact with his son since early August, after officers from a UK counter-terrorism unit contacted him to ask about Hisham's older brother.

He claimed that he "hardly knew" either of the men, who had been taken away by their mother before travelling to Yemen to study Islam.

Suleman, who was due to take exams at a UK school, had expressed support for "the Islamic caliphate," his friends said.

Shortly after the Turkish hostages were released by ISIS in September, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said that the Turkish government would not reveal details of how they were released.

"There are things we cannot talk about," Erdogan told a group consisting of some of the hostages and their families. "To run the state is not like running a grocery store. We have to protect sensitive issues. If you don't, there would be a price to pay."

"Whether there was or wasn't a swap - 49 personnel were returned to Turkey," Erdogan added. "I would not exchange that for anything."

EDITOR'S COMMENT: It would be easy to blame Turkey for breaking the "universal" (?) rule: "we do not negotiate with terrorists". But when comes to your own people, then things might not be that easy and straight forward. Some countries pay the ransom (and deny that); others don't.. Some use captured terrorists as ransom money for diplomats or a single soldier. It is a multilevel complex problem where all solutions are acceptable in a submission game where almost always victims are innocent people that happened to be in the wrong place the wrong time.



Cuba Mourns Anniversary of Terrorist Bombing of Cubana Flight 455

Source: <http://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/Cuba-Mourns-Anniversary-of-Terrorist-Bombing-of-Cubana-Flight-455-20141006-0006.html>



October 06 - "The reality that the U.S. government failed to charge Posada with terrorism — in connection with either the Cubana bombing, or the 1997 Havana hotel bombings — is a travesty of justice," said author Stephen Kimber.

Twenty-five years before September 11 there was October 6.

In 1976, on October 6, anti-Castro terrorists planted and ignited two bombs on a Cuban passenger plane killing all 73



passengers and five crew members on board after it crashed off of the coast of Barbados. It was Cubana de Aviacion, flight 455.



Stephen Kimber, author of "What Lies Across the Water: The Real Story of the Cuban Five," told teleSUR English it was "the most deadly act of air terrorism in the Americas prior to

became so incensed that Cuba would send troops to Angola, one of the many battle fronts of the Cold War, that he told President Gerald Ford that he wanted to "smash Castro" and "humiliate" the Cuban government.

Kissinger wanted to launch airstrikes against Cuba, mine Cuban harbors, and impose severe economic and political sanctions against the island nation. Ford nixed the idea until after the election, which he eventually lost to President Jimmy Carter.

"That revelation shows us that the U.S. decided on a different tact to humiliate Cuba," José Pertierra, a Washington-based lawyer, told teleSUR English. "What the U.S. did is subcontract work out to Cuban-American terrorists who they had trained and funded."



9/11."

The average age of the passengers was 30, including a 22-year-old pregnant woman. The Cuban fencing team was also aboard, after just having won gold medals at the Pan American games.

Previously secret documents just released in October by the National Security Archive, an investigative journalism and research group based at George Washington University, show relations between Washington and Havana took a sharp turn for the worse that year when then-Secretary of State Henry Kissinger

Pertierra was approached by the government of former Venezuelan president Hugo Chavez in 2005 to extradite one of the Cuban-American terrorists who masterminded the bombing, Luis Posada Carriles.

Posada Carriles, a former CIA asset, snuck into the United States in March 2005, where he took up residence in Miami, a hotbed for the hardline anti-Castro Cuban exile community.

Clarence M. Kelley, who served as Director of the FBI between 1973-1978, sent a letter to



Kissinger on November 5, 1976, stating that according to a confidential source inside of Venezuela's intelligence service, the bombing of the Cuban passenger plane was "planned, in part, in Caracas, Venezuela, at two meetings attended by Morales Navarrete, Luis Posada Carriles and Frank Castro."

Two Venezuelan nationals, Hernan Ricardo and Freddy Lugo, who were on the plane and responsible for planting the bombs, were picked up by Barbadian police. They confessed to Barbadian and Trinidad officials to the bombings, but not before implicating **Posada Carriles**, who they say trained them in explosives. Both served 20-year sentences in Venezuela after being extradited there.

Posada Carriles, in addition to being trained in explosives by the CIA, was also trained at the infamous School of the Americas in Fort Benning, Georgia. His long resume includes a stint in Guatemala in efforts to overthrow the government, working as the head on Venezuelan intelligence running counterinsurgency operations against the guerrilla, as well as running weapons to the U.S.- backed drug running paramilitary Contras in Nicaragua.

Posada Carriles was also arrested and imprisoned in Venezuela before escaping from prison in 1985 prior to the conclusion of his trial for his role in the bombing of Cuban airliner 455.

Posada Carriles' terrorism against Cuba didn't stop with the passenger plane bombing. He also admitted responsibility for the 1997 bombings of hotels in Havana that killed an Italian-Canadian man and injured 11 people. Posada Carriles' reportedly told a New York Times reporter in a 1998 taped interview that despite killing the man, "I sleep like a baby."

"He's the Osama bin Laden of terrorism on the Americas," said Pertierra.

After flaunting his presence in the United States in an interview with the Miami Herald, he was shortly thereafter detained by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and imprisoned in El Paso for illegally entering the country. However, rather than deport him to Venezuela where he is a wanted fugitive, he was released on bail.



CIA agent and one of the engineers of the 1976 terrorist bombing of Cubana Airlines flight 455 that killed 73 passengers.

LUIS POSADA CARRILES
U.S.A. Trained and Sponsored
TERRORIST

MEVY-2005

Posada Carriles finally saw the inside of a U.S. court room in 2011. However, not for terrorism charges, such as conspiring to kill 73 innocent airplane passengers in cold blood, or blowing up hotels in Havana. He was charged, and then later acquitted, for perjury and immigration infractions. Since then the Venezuelan government has suspended efforts to extradite the terrorist.

"It's the problem with the U.S. war on terrorism. Washington wants to prosecute a war on terrorism a la carte," said Pertierra. "They want to pick and choose the terrorists they want to prosecute. He was one of their terrorists. He has too many secrets."

An example of Washington's hypocrisy is the case of then so-called Cuban Five. They were five counter-terrorism agents sent to Miami to collect intelligence in order to prevent the Cuban exile community, which considers Posada Carriles a hero-, from planning or funding further terrorist attacks against Cuba.

The five Cuban agents were arrested in 1998 and swiftly convicted and sentenced to harsh prison terms. They were accused

of conspiracy to commit espionage, but not of actual espionage. Nor could the U.S. government verify that any real acts of espionage had been carried out.

"The different approaches with relation to Luis Posada Carriles



and the Five, is one more sign of the incredible power of the Miami exiles not only over American politics and foreign policy but also its justice system,” said Kimber. “The American people have yet to come to grips with the reality that their country tolerates, even encourages the kind of terrorist activities it

rightly deplores when others do it to them if the target is Cuba.”

Meanwhile, Posada Carriles remains a free man in sunny South Florida.

“He does what any right-wing terrorist does in Miami — retiring and living a cushy life,” said Pertierra.

Four arrested in London in plot to behead people on city streets

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20141008-four-arrested-in-london-in-plot-to-behead-people-on-city-streets>

October 08 – **Officers from the Metropolitan Police counterterrorism unit early yesterday arrested four young men in London over a suspected terrorist plot to grab people on the streets of London and behead them.** One of the four arrested was said to have links to Syria and Islamic State (ISIS).



Counter-terrorism officials said one of the four had access to weapons and, accordingly, the officers who raided his address were heavily armed. This one suspect was subdued by a Taser gun.

The four men, aged 20 to 21, were being questioned at police stations in central London.

The *Guardian* reports that a Whitehall source told the Press Association that officers believed the raids were an early disruption of what could have been a

“significant plot.”

Security analysts have said that ISIS would likely seek to retaliate against the United Kingdom in response to British fighter planes joining the U.S. and Arab states in bombing raids on ISIS targets in Iraq (the United Kingdom is not taking part in attacks on ISIS targets in Syria).

The four men arrested were resident in Britain. One of the addresses was in west London, and the rest were in central London. Scotland Yard said: “One of the men aged 21 was Tasered during his arrest. He was not injured and did not require medical treatment.”

The Met said that officers from the counter-terrorism command — SO15 — “were assisted in the execution of warrants at one of the addresses by officers from the specialist firearms command (SCO19). No shots were fired.

“A number of residential addresses and vehicles are being searched by specialist officers in west and central London as part of the investigation. The searches are ongoing. These arrests and searches are part of an ongoing investigation into Islamist-related terrorism.”

The raids followed a pre-planned operation, with the men having been subject to close surveillance by counterterrorism investigators for some time.

The *Guardian* notes that in a joint meeting between SO15 and MI5 at an executive liaison group, the decision was made to disrupt any plot. Counterterrorism investigators said they had enough material to stage arrests, and there was concern that a delay in arresting the four may allow them to carry out their plan.

Experts note that a decision to disrupt a plot by suspects under tight surveillance is usually taken because it is believed there is too great a chance of an attack being staged.

Counterterror investigators in the police and MI5 have been dealing with an increasing workload as they assess and investigate potential threats from people with connections to several hotspots around the world.

The threat from ISIS extremists is the current major source of concern, but there remain worries about those with connections to violent extremists in Syria and al-Qaeda-linked



groups there, as well as al-Shabaab in Somalia, and also al-Qaeda inspired terrorists with links to Pakistan.

Intelligence chief claims Islamic State terrorists visited Costa Rica

Source: <http://insidecostarica.com/2014/10/11/intelligence-chief-claims-islamic-state-terrorists-visited-costa-rica/>



October 11 – Costa Rica’s Directorate of Intelligence and Security (DIS) claims its agency has detected the entry of foreign nationals into the country connected with terrorist organizations, including the Islamic State (also known as ISIS or ISIL).

In an interview with *La Nación*, DIS chief Mariano Figueres said he could not reveal the dates, numbers, or for what purposes the suspected terrorists had entered the country, but admitted that some of the suspected terrorists were admitted into the country legally while others had entered the country unlawfully.

Figueres said that in some cases the country had been previously alerted of the suspected terrorists’ identities by other countries. Others were only identified after they were present in Costa Rica.

The intelligence chief said that the suspected terrorists were in the country for only short periods and that all have left the country.

Asked if the country can deny entry to such persons, Figueres said yes, but added that “[Costa Rica] is a country of freedom which respects human rights. We believe it is important to always track the entry and exit of such people in order to coordinate any action with other intelligence agencies and to prevent the development of any local [terrorist] organizations.”

The horrific act that connects Islamic State to a few Japanese schoolchildren

By Michael Hoffman

Source: <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2014/10/11/national/media-national/horrific-act-connects-islamic-state-japanese-schoolchildren/#.VDyy-haPwxA>

Beheadings. Dismemberings. The world is turning into a horror movie.

The Islamic State immediately comes to mind. Terrorism is nothing new, but the Islamic State has amplified terrorism’s emotional impact — perpetrating, boasting of and broadcasting atrocities ranging from the mass slaughter of innocents to staged, scripted beheadings.

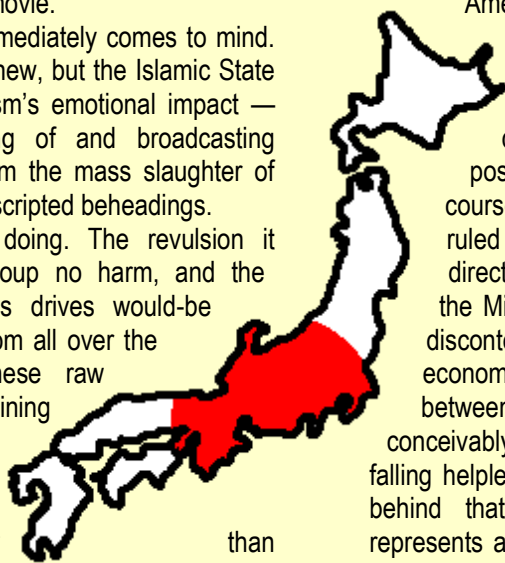
It knows what it’s doing. The revulsion it causes does the group no harm, and the admiration it inspires drives would-be fighters to its side from all over the world. Many of these raw recruits, eager for training and a mission, are citizens of countries the terrorists hate even more fiercely than ordinary decent people hate beheadings and dismemberings. With a British

passport a terrorist can infiltrate Britain; with an American one, America; with a Japanese one, Japan.

Is Japan in danger? Weekly

Playboy magazine poses the question, and answers that the possibility cannot be ruled out. Of course it can’t. No possibility can be ruled out, and though Japan has little directly to do with the political morass in the Middle East, simmering homegrown discontent arising from 20 years of economic stagnation and a spreading gap between the rich and the not-rich could conceivably encourage a view among those

falling helplessly and desperately behind that the Islamic State represents a solution of sorts. **At week’s end, in fact, there were press reports of several young**



Japanese men under investigation in connection with alleged plans to go to Syria to fight.

The Islamic State is ghastly but comprehensible, a more or less predictable outcome of a botched “war on terror” or, going further back, of exploitation and resentment dating back to the colonial era. **But late last month police in Kobe arrested a 47-year-old man in connection with the death and dismemberment of a 6-year-old girl. What is the sane mind to make of that?**

Insanity, perhaps; but that, rather like a word routinely applied to the Islamic State — evil — doesn’t tell us much; it merely expresses an appalled sense of enormity. Insanity, unlike evil, has clinical and legal definitions, but they are of little help to those of us who are not clinicians and lawyers.

It’s impossible, contemplating the Kobe case, not to have a sense of *deja vu*: children grotesquely murdered, sometimes by children.

A by no means exhaustive list includes the 1997 murder-beheading (also in Kobe) of an 11-year-old boy by a 14-year-old boy; the 2004 murder in Sasebo, Nagasaki Prefecture, of a 12-year-old girl by an 11-year-old girl; and the murder-dismemberment this past June (also in Sasebo) of a 15-year-old girl by a 16-year-old girl.

The mind reels. What kind of problem are we dealing with? Moral? Psychological? Pathological? Social? Is society as a whole somehow to blame? Or the parents? Writing in this month’s *Bungei Shunju* magazine, nonfiction writer Kunio Yanagida notes that whenever a case like this arises, education authorities vow renewed efforts to “teach children the value of life.” The limpness of the phrase may go some way toward explaining why the message seems not to be getting through.

Yanagida threads the two Sasebo murders and the earlier Kobe one together in search of common themes. One is the fragility and susceptibility of a child’s mind, and it is terrifying. How easy it is for a young mind to go astray! Insufficient parental love, a sudden reverse in the family fortunes — anything can strike it, warp it, dislodge it, you never quite know how. The 16-year-old Kobe suspect lost her mother to cancer last year. A terrible blow — and yet other children lose their parents without going altogether off the deep end. Her

father remarried six months later. She may have resented that. But her first need for counseling occurred long before when, aged 11, she laced two classmates’ school lunches with bleach.

Is the problem neurochemical, and therefore beyond moral judgment? In July she reportedly told her new stepmother how much she enjoyed dissecting cats; wouldn’t it be fun, she added, to kill and dissect a person? Three days later the dismembered body of her friend, Aiwa Matsuo, was found. The two girls had spent the day together.

The 1997 murder-beheading of 11-year-old Jun Hase by the 14-year-old boy who came to be known in the media as “Youth A” has proved a kind of entry into the modern era of this kind of atrocity, in part because so much has been learned from it. Youth A’s therapy was revolutionary, and is deemed a success. He was, in effect, given a new personality, and under a new identity has reentered society.

Does Youth A, asks Yanagida, teach us anything about “Girl S,” the Sasebo suspect? Youth A too showed a penchant for dissecting cats, and, like Girl S, seems to have been deprived of a fair share of parental affection. Yanagida quotes Kobe University psychologist Hisao Nakai as pointing out the sexual roots of the boy’s strange compulsions: He would masturbate while imagining himself ripping people open and devouring their innards. In young boys, Nakai says, violent and sexual impulses are undifferentiated; only around puberty does the brain separate the two. In Youth A that separation failed to occur. Is that relevant to girls, to Girl S in particular? The research to date is inconclusive. For knowledge of this kind, a very high price must be paid. Girl S will no doubt teach us much we’d prefer not to have to know.

Youth A’s new personality arose, Yanagida explains, from a carefully managed “rebirth,” a female psychologist playing the role of his mother and a male one of his father. Three years passed with no result. The first hopeful sign, the foundation on which the subsequent regeneration rested, was a normal sexual response on the boy’s part to his new “mother.” Youth A would be 31 now. Where he is, what he’s doing and under what identity he’s doing it are well-kept secrets. It feels strange to wish him well, but what else can you wish?



Is there anything in common, mutilated corpses aside, between the Islamic State and Youth A? Between the Islamic State

and Girl S? Very likely a lot of people with impressive research qualifications will be wondering the same thing.

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Does the Islamic State Really Have 'Nothing to Do with Islam'?

By Jeffrey M. Bale

Source: <http://www.breitbart.com/Big-Peace/2014/10/10/Analysis-Does-the-Islamic-State-Really-Have-Nothing-to-Do-with-Islam>

Note: This analysis has been excerpted, with the approval of the author, from a much longer scholarly article that will be published in an academic journal.

"Which will come first, flying cars and vacations to Mars, or a simple acknowledgement that beliefs guide behavior and that certain religious ideas – jihad, martyrdom, blasphemy, apostasy – reliably lead to oppression and murder?"

Sam Harris, Sleepwalking Toward Armageddon

As is invariably the case these days in the wake of the terrorist violence, brutality, and atrocities carried out explicitly in the name of Islam, a host of dissimulating Islamist activists, other Muslims in a state of psychological denial, and apologetic Western pundits insist that the actions of the terrorist group calling itself al-Dawla al-Islamiyya (IS: the Islamic State) have little or nothing to do with Islam.

Not long ago, many such commentators also argued that the horrendous actions committed by the Nigerian jihadist group Jama'at Ahl al-Sunna li al-Da'wa wa al-Jihad, better known as Boko Haram (Western Influence is Sinful), had nothing to do with its members' interpretations of Islam.

In all such cases, however, the perpetrators of these violent actions not only proudly insist that their actions are inspired by the Qur'an and the exemplary words and deeds of Muhammad himself (as recorded in the canonical hadith collections), but explicitly cite relevant Qur'anic passages and the reported actions of their prophet to justify those actions. Therefore, to argue that jihadist terrorists are not directly inspired and primarily motivated by their interpretations of Islamic doctrines and by clear precedents from early Islamic history, one must stubbornly ignore what the actual protagonists keep telling the entire world.

But why ignore the claims of the perpetrators and instead rely on Islamist activists, who are

often peddling outright disinformation, or on Western commentators, most of whom know little or nothing about Islam or Islamism, for explanations of this behavior? These pundits are prone to minimize the central role played by Islamist ideology and erroneously ascribe the actions of jihadist terrorists to assorted subsidiary causal factors, such as garden-variety political grievances, poverty, lack of democracy, psychopathology, greed, or simple hunger for power.

Needless to say, most of the commentators who keep insisting, against all evidence to the contrary, that the actions of jihadist terrorists cannot be attributed to their interpretations of Islam do not also argue that the violent actions of other types of extremists cannot be attributed to their ideological beliefs. On the contrary, whenever other types of terrorists carry out gruesome attacks, many of those same commentators are quick to ascribe their actions primarily to their proclaimed theological and ideological beliefs – and justifiably so.

One can easily illustrate this glaring contrast with respect to the analytical treatment of Islamist terrorism by asking a simple question: when was the last time that any more or less respected commentator made the case that Nazi ideology had nothing to do with inspiring particular acts of terrorism committed by self-identified neo-Nazis, or that notions of white supremacy had nothing to do with



anti-minority violence committed by members of the Ku Klux Klan? Thus it is virtually only in cases of acts of terrorism committed by jihadists that one encounters so much unwillingness to face reality and so much frantic desperation to absolve Islam itself – or even Islamist interpretations of Islam – from shouldering any responsibility for inspiring acts committed in its name.

Some academicians mistakenly minimize the role of ideology as a key factor in inspiring the violence and terrorism carried out by non-state extremist groups, not just in the case of jihadist terrorism but also in other such cases. These efforts are seriously misleading, since they tend to be based on flawed social science theories that overemphasize the role of "rational choice," materialistic rather than idealistic motives, personal psychological factors, "really existing" political and economic grievances, or larger impersonal structural forces as causal factors in the etiology of terrorism. However, they at least have the merit of not employing double standards, i.e., of making an unwarranted and wholly artificial distinction between the causes of Islamist terrorism and other types of ideologically-inspired terrorism. Indeed, although some have specifically applied such problematic notions in the context of Islamist terrorism, there is no reason to suppose that they regard ideology as being any more important in other terrorism contexts.

But the most egregious nonsense about the Islamic State is currently being peddled by ideologues, spokesmen, and activists from Islamist organizations, both in the Muslim world and in the West. Leading Saudi clerics, Saudi-sponsored and Saudi-funded international Islamic organizations like the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), and numerous Islamist groups and networks linked to the Muslim Brotherhood are now belatedly hastening to denounce the IS and to falsely claim that it has "nothing to do with Islam" or that its appalling actions are "un-Islamic" or even "anti-Islamic."

Unfortunately, many naïve or agenda-driven Western journalists cite these deceptive statements by Islamists in an effort to challenge conservative Western media claims that not enough Muslims are speaking out against the IS. Indeed, those journalists tend to highlight such statements to give the impression that lots of supposedly moderate

Muslims are publicly opposing the IS, either without actually knowing or without bothering to mention that most of the people and organizations that are making such statements are in fact Islamists who are trying to whitewash Islam and their own brands of Islamism, burnish their own tarnished images and thereby protect themselves, and/or mislead gullible "infidels" in the media.

Most of these commentators repeat the same one-sided mantras that have been endlessly repeated since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, e.g., that "Islam is a religion of peace" or that "Islam does not sanction terrorism and beheadings," usually without providing any actual textual or historical evidence in support of their claims. This is all the more peculiar, since if the jihadists affiliated with the IS were in fact egregiously misinterpreting Islam, it should be very easy indeed for their critics to point this out by referring to Islam's sacred scriptures and the reported words and deeds of Muhammad to explicitly repudiate barbarous IS actions such as the wholesale massacre or torture of captives, the confiscation of their land and wealth, the enslavement (sexual and otherwise) of their women, the gruesome public beheadings and stonings of designated enemies and "sinners" in order to terrorize others and perhaps also to precipitate the arrival of the Mahdi and the onset of the "end times," the wanton destruction of places of worship and historical monuments, and the list goes on and on.

Yet they generally fail to do this. On those rare occasions when they try to demonstrate that these kinds of activities are "un-Islamic," usually by citing a handful of Qur'anic passages out of context or by noting a few recorded examples of Muhammad's compassion, their arguments are weak and unconvincing, if not preposterous. The jihadists themselves and certain hardline pro-jihadist clerics have thus far seemingly had little trouble rebutting their Muslim critics' often specious arguments.

An illustrative example of such Islamist sophistry is provided by Nihad 'Awad, national executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), a key component of the Muslim Brotherhood network in the U.S.

In an opinion piece entitled "ISIS is Not Just Un-Islamic, It is Anti-Islamic," 'Awad describes ISIS as



a "criminal gang" that "falsely...claims to uphold the banner of Islam." In support of his claim, 'Awad attempts to redefine the term jihad in such a way that it cannot be associated with offensive warfare.

The claim that the term jihad does not refer, among other things, to offensive warfare against the enemies of Islam with the goal of expanding the dar al-Islam until the entire world is brought under the aegis of Islam is blatantly false. Such a sanitized definition of jihad, a noun deriving from the verb jahada, meaning "to struggle" or "to exert oneself," conveniently ignores the fact that jihad bi al-sayf ("jihad of the sword") has always been the most commonplace meaning of the term, both historically and at the present time.

At a September rally by "Muslims Against ISIS" in Dearborn, Mich., Dawud Walid, another Islamist activist associated with CAIR, cited one Qur'anic passage (5:32) that is invariably referred to by those who are trying to claim that Islam is inherently peaceful. "Whoever kills an innocent soul, it is like they have killed all of mankind," Walid said in summary.

He, like so many others, conveniently ignored the fact that this particular sura refers specifically to the "Children of Israel," rather than to Muslims, and that it was presented for didactic purposes in the context of Cain wrongly killing Abel: "Because of that, We decreed upon the Children of Israel that whoever kills a soul unless for (killing) a soul or for corruption [done] in the land - it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one - it is as if he had saved mankind entirely. And our messengers had certainly come to them (i.e., Jews) with clear proofs. Then indeed many of them, [even] after that, throughout the land, were transgressors."

Although this message was intended to provide moral guidance to Muslims as well about what was and was not permissible, it was cited in reference to Allah's supposed warning to transgressing Jews. More tellingly, the following aya (5:33) specifies which categories of people can be legitimately killed, crucified, or dismembered by Muslim believers for their sins: "those who wage war [yuharibun] against Allah and His Prophet" and those who "strive to spread corruption/mischief [fasadan] in the land..." Finally, those who cite 5:32 or other ostensibly peaceful passages from the Qur'an (such as 2: 256) as authoritative fail to mention that, according to the doctrine of abrogation

(naskh), the intolerant and bellicose passages "revealed" during the later Medinan period supposedly abrogate many if not most of the tolerant, compassionate passages from the prior Meccan and earlier Medinan period.

Hence it is all too easy, and not at all unorthodox or heretical, for jihadists to insist that they are enjoined by the Qur'an itself to kill, subjugate, and enslave the enemies of Islam, irrespective of what Islam apologists or Islamist apologists may claim.

Another participant at the "Muslims Against ISIS" rally in Michigan, Iraqi-American Alia Almulla, made the bold claim that the Qur'an "doesn't teach terrorism" and went on to say that "[p]eople need to become more educated about Islam and actually read the Qur'an." She is absolutely right to encourage people to learn more about Islam and to read the Qur'an, but gives little evidence in her quoted comments that she has carefully read the Qur'an herself. If she had, she could hardly have overlooked sura 8:60, which is so often referred to and praised by Islamists precisely because it sanctions the use of terrorism against the enemies of Islam: "And prepare against them whatever you are able of power and of steeds of war by which you may terrify the enemy of Allah and your enemy and others besides them whom you do not know [but] whom Allah knows. And whatever you spend in the cause of Allah will be fully repaid to you, and you will not be wronged."

That particular passage of the Qur'an has not only been cited favorably by Qa'idat al-Jihad leader Usama bin Ladin and other jihadist terrorists, but the first two words from it (wa a'idduwa = "and prepare/make ready/muster") also appear directly beneath the pair of crossed swords on the bottom of the symbol of the Muslim Brotherhood, the Egyptian Islamist organization with numerous branches and offshoots throughout the world that nowadays tends to publicly eschew armed jihad for purely pragmatic or tactical reasons but not infrequently advocated and resorted to violence and terrorism in the past.

Moreover, there are numerous other Qur'anic passages that explicitly enjoin Muslims to wage war and/or slay, capture, enslave, and subjugate "infidels," "apostates," and "hypocrites," such as 8:39, 8:65, 8:67-



68, 9:5, 9:13, 9:29, 9:36, 9:41, 9:73, 9:111,23:1-6, 33:50, 47:35, 48:29, 2:193, 2:216, 3:140-1, 4:24, 4:76, and 5:33. Indeed, several of those very passages, especially in the Surat al-Tawba, are believed by many Islamic scholars to have abrogated and superseded multiple relatively tolerant passages dating from the Meccan or early Medinan eras. Hence those who cite certain supposedly "abrogated" (mansukh) suras as evidence that Islam really promotes compassion and tolerance rather than intolerance and bellicosity towards unbelievers and "insufficiently Islamic" Muslims, can easily be dismissed as egregious "misinterpreters" of Islam, and indeed demonized and targeted as "apostates," by pro-jihad Islamists. Even if we limited ourselves herein to discussing particularly gruesome high profile actions such as public beheadings, one can find passages sanctioning this behavior in the Qur'an, such as sura 47:4 and sura 8:12.

How, then, is it possible to argue – especially if one interprets the Qur'an in a strict, literalist fashion rather than very loosely – that violent actions which are explicitly enjoined in Islamic scriptures are actually "un-Islamic"?

Furthermore, it is not only the Qur'an itself, but also the recorded "customary practice" (sunnah) of Muhammad himself that provides ample justification and sanction for much of the barbaric behavior of IS jihadists, who may in fact be consciously trying to "reenact" Muhammad's own successful actions. In this context, it must be remembered that Muhammad is regarded by other Muslims both as the last of Allah's prophets and as the ideal Muslim. As such, his words and deeds are viewed as both exemplary and worthy of emulation. Unfortunately, Islamic sources that are considered authentic by Muslims, such as the canonical hadith collections, the early biographies of Muhammad, and various historical chronicles of the early phases of the Arab conquests, all provide ample evidence of the harshness, brutality, and cruelty that Muhammad, his companions, and the "rightly-guided" Caliphs at times exhibited, especially in the course of their military campaigns, toward their designated enemies.

On the other hand, there is no doubt that many of the activities of the IS violate the letter and the spirit of traditional Islamic "just war" doctrines, since IS jihadists deliberately and often indiscriminately target, abuse, and slaughter non-combatants from "enemy"

groups. These just war doctrines, which in theory forbid Muslims from deliberately targeting women, children, the aged, and the physically or mentally infirm and, more broadly, from carrying out disproportionate levels of violence, were developed by medieval Muslim jurists on the basis of certain Qur'anic passages and various compassionate acts and instructions of Muhammad recorded in ostensibly reliable ahadith.

Even so, the grim reality in practice was that, during the time of Muhammad and his successors, civilians within all of those protected categories were often killed inadvertently or in the normal course of carrying out regular military operations by Muslim troops, especially if doing so was considered necessary in order to defeat their foes.

Fortunately, Islam can be interpreted, and indeed has been interpreted over the centuries, in many different ways by living, breathing Muslims. Although it is neither unorthodox in most respects nor limited to the extremist fringe, the strict, literalist, puritanical interpretation of Islam that is characteristic of the Islamists, including the jihadists, is far from being the only "legitimate" interpretation of Islam. Along with secularists in the Muslim world, Muslim rationalists, modernists, and even some traditionalists have tended to interpret Islam in less restrictive, punitive, or sectarian ways that are at least partially compatible with modernity and democratic pluralism.

Although in many ways scriptural literalists have advantages over moderates in religious debates, Muslims can nonetheless adopt various modes of argumentation to challenge theocratic Islamist interpretations of Islam. As with Judaism and Christianity, genuinely moderate Muslims can argue that the injunctions in the Qur'an and the commands of Muhammad may well have been relevant and even appropriate during the historical contexts in which they were issued, but that they are not all necessarily applicable in today's radically different historical context. They also can argue that many of those Qur'anic passages and statements of Muhammad were difficult to understand and thus do not provide clear, unambiguous guidelines for Muslim behavior at the present time. Hence Muslims should not interpret them



slavishly, dogmatically, or in an invariably literalist fashion, but rather apply human reason and interpret them, especially if the meaning is unclear, in a more contextual (historically-grounded), allegorical, or metaphorical way.

They can further make a case that many Qur'anic strictures and ideas of Muhammad were relatively progressive by 7th century standards, especially in the context of Arab tribal society, and that they therefore embodied a spirit of innovation, pragmatism, and moderation that Muslims today should aspire to emulate. And they can simply ignore or reject the doctrine of abrogation on various religio-legal grounds, since that doctrine has frequently been used by some Islamic scholars and militants to justify more extreme interpretations of Islam.

Nevertheless, it is impossible for any knowledgeable person to characterize the beliefs and activities of IS jihadists as "un-Islamic," much less as "anti-Islamic," since Islamic supremacism and intolerance of non-Muslims are all too characteristic in the Qur'an and Muhammad's sunna. As moderate Canadian Muslim Tarek Fatah has justly noted: *"Islam is not a religion of peace. It's not necessarily a religion of war, either, but it would be a lie to deny that its history and literature are seeped [sic] in armed jihad,*

assassinations and bloodshed that simply cannot be swept under a carpet. Only we Muslims can reform Islam for future generations. But first, we must stop lying in the name of Allah. It's no use denouncing ISIS while refusing to renounce [armed] jihad."

Although many Muslims, like other religious believers, can be expected to be overly defensive about their faith, it remains far less understandable why so many Western leaders and commentators are also peddling the same falsehoods about the IS having "nothing to do with Islam." If the latter honestly believe what they are saying, then they are either hopelessly ignorant about Islam, Islamic history, and Islamism, or are wearing impenetrable ideological blinders that prevent them from seeing reality, or are living in an acute state of psychological denial that borders on the pathological and the clinically delusional. But if such Westerners do not actually believe what they are saying, then they are fooling themselves that their embarrassingly facile attempts to divorce Islam from Islamism will somehow end up being the most effective way to counter Islamist ideology or rally support from Muslims for various Western foreign policy and counterterrorist initiatives in the region.

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5 reasons Turkey isn't attacking Islamic State in Syria

By Oren Dorell

Source: <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2014/10/08/5-reasons-turkey-is-not-fighting-is-syria/16919949/>

The U.S.-led military coalition is concentrating airstrikes around the Syrian town of Kobani, a Kurdish enclave on the Turkish border, but NATO ally Turkey has yet to take action to stop the Islamic State.

Here are five reasons why:

Anger against America

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is frustrated the United States did not get involved in the 3-year-old Syrian civil war until

radicals from the Islamic State — also known as ISIS or ISIL — took over large parts of Iraq. Erdogan had urged the United States to help Syria's moderate rebels overthrow the regime of Syrian President Bashar Assad, but he does not want to devote Turkish troops to the fight.

Anger against Kurds

Kobani is in the hands of a Kurdish faction, the PYD, whose leaders in Damascus never joined the



fight to overthrow Assad. The Assad regime didn't attack Kobani in the past three years and left behind weapons for the Kurds to protect themselves.

"Now Kobani needs Turkey," says Ilhan Tanir, Washington correspondent for the Turkish daily *Vatan*, "but Turkey is implying, 'You've been gambling for three years and already called for autonomous regions without consulting us, so this is part of the gamble. Now you are on your own.'"

Lack of trust

Turkey has been fighting a 30-year war with a Kurdish separatist movement, the PKK. The PYD is associated with the PKK, a State Department-designated terrorist group. Erdogan considers the PKK to be equivalent to the Islamic State.

As a result, the government fears if it provides weapons to Kurdish fighters, those weapons will be used against Turkey.

Terrorism concerns

Militants have funneled weapons and fighters through Turkey into Syria. The Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra, an al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria, have networks in Turkey.

"If Turkey attacks ISIS in Syria, there could be a serious blowback within Turkey, and Turkey does not want to take this risk," Tanir said.

Islamic State ties

Turkish security and intelligence services may have ties to Islamic State militants. The group released 46 Turkish diplomats it had abducted the day before the United States launched airstrikes against it. Turkey, a NATO member, may have known the airstrikes were about to begin and pressured its contacts in the Islamic State to release its diplomats.

"This implies Turkey has more influence or stronger ties to ISIS than people would think," Tanir said.

Oren Dorell covers breaking news and foreign affairs. He's been to almost all the Lower 48 and a dozen countries, covering disasters, crime and revolution.

Germany's Islamic State problem

By Benjamin Weinthal

Source: http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/10/germanys_islamic_sta.php

There is a growing sense among leading German politicians that the Federal Republic's preoccupation with the NSA surveillance scandal should not overshadow the pressing need to confront the Islamic State.

"German worry over Islamist attack eclipses spy scandal," *Bloomberg News* headlined its Oct. 8 report on the issue. A new reality appears to be sinking in. Roderich Kiesewetter, a Bundestag deputy from Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democratic Union and a former army colonel, was quoted as saying, "In the German public, there is more of awareness that our intelligence services need information to confront these terror threats."

Some German politicians from powerful opposition parties, the Greens and the Left Party, have called for US airstrikes on Islamic State positions near the besieged city of Kobane in northern Syria. This call has come despite the Greens' and the Left Party's traditional anti-Americanism and hardline anti-intervention policies.

According to German authorities, an estimated 450 German Muslims have gone to fight against the Syrian regime. Most of the 450 sought membership with Islamic State. Roughly 40 women and a 13-year-old boy are among those who have departed for Syria. *Die Welt* provides a helpful systematic breakdown of "German Jihadists in Syria."

A spokeswoman for Germany's intelligence agency told this writer that the government cannot track individuals traveling to Turkey because the country does not require visas. European jihadists frequently use southern Turkey as an entry point into Syria.

Germany's interior ministry is struggling to modernize its counterterrorism policies. On Oct. 2, Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere acknowledged, "The situation has changed over the last few months." Germany outlawed Islamic State activities in September. In the same month, a Frankfurt court started the trial of 20-year-old Kreshnik Berisha for



membership in the Islamic State; it is the first terrorism trial of an Islamic State member in Germany. Berisha, who was born in Germany to Kosovan parents, was arrested in December 2013.

De Maiziere stressed the need for more sophisticated surveillance mechanisms to track Islamist combatants. He cited revocation of passports and identity cards as ways to combat terrorism.

German officials are tangled up in knots over Islamic State. While they recognize the threat, there has been little appetite over the years to clamp down on jihadist networks in the country. In short, Berlin's lax policies toward terrorist groups have contributed to its Islamic State crisis.

It is worth recalling that Hezbollah's so-called political wing is legal in the country.

According to Germany's national domestic intelligence report covering 2013, and published in June 2014, Hezbollah has 950 active members in the Federal Republic.

There are also roughly 6,300 radical Islamists in Germany who are supporters of the Sunni branch of Salafism, Interior Minister de Maiziere said last week.

Many of these Salafists are connected to the ideologies of al Qaeda, Shabaab, or the Islamic State.

Germany's latest domestic intelligence report described the growth of Salafists as the most "dynamic Islamic movement" in Germany.

An estimated 150 radical Islamists have returned from the Middle East war theater to Germany.

In recent days, the battle for the northern Syrian town of Kobane, where Islamic State fighters are carrying out an assault on Kurdish civilians and fighters, has had repercussions in Germany. On Oct. 7, pro-Islamic State Muslims fought Kurds in the city of Hamburg, resulting in 14 people being injured and 22 arrests. The police used water cannons to disperse the street battle.

In an eye-popping report last week, Germany's ARD television station stated that over the years authorities allowed -- and even encouraged -- the travel of German Islamists to foreign countries. The policy appeared to be a kind of "export of terror" designed to reduce the risk domestically. "Persons who are dangerous and could launch attacks are brought outside of the country," a government official said.

"Germany is on the way to be world champion in terrorism export," one commentator wrote in *Die Welt* newspaper in 2010. The author was

not referencing the green light from German authorities for jihadists to leave for the Afghanistan and Pakistan war theaters, but rather the sheer number of radical German Muslims departing for conflict zones. The ARD report helps to explain why so many radical German Islamists have enjoyed unrestricted movement.

The chief destination for German jihadists now is to fight in Syria, *Die Welt* reported last week. German intelligence agencies also believe that jihadists who were based in terror camps in Afghanistan and Pakistan are now in Syria or on their way there. Pakistani jihadist networks -- ranging from al Qaeda to the Taliban to the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan -- have attracted German Muslims to Pakistan and Afghanistan. The large number of Germans gave rise to so-called "German colonies" in the region.

According to German security information obtained by *Die Welt*, the German-Moroccans Yassin and Mounir Chouka and their wives, Nele Ch. and Luisa S., as well as Seynabou S. from Hamburg, along with children, relocated from Pakistan to Syria. It is unclear if the terrorists made it to Syria. Some of the group's children were born in terror camps in Pakistan. While in Pakistan, the Choukas joined the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. Now, they have declared allegiance to Islamic State.

The Choukas, who are originally from the western German city of Bonn, motivated Arid Uka, a 24-year-old radical Islamist and Kosovo native who worked at Frankfurt's airport, to murder two American airmen and wound two others in March 2011. Uka was sentenced to life in prison but Germany's liberal judicial system may release him after 18 years of prison time.

Another German jihadist, former rapper Denis Cuspert a.k.a. singer Deso Dogg, is said to be in Syria and has been linked to both the Islamic State and al Qaeda's Al Nusrah Front. Germany plans to submit his name for inclusion in the UN's sanctions list, *Der Spiegel* reported on Oct. 5.

While issuing rhetorical support for strikes on Islamic State, the Merkel administration decided not to join US president Barack Obama's airstrike coalition in Iraq and Syria to knock out Islamic State fighters and sites. Merkel did, however, send military arms to the Kurds and military



personnel to train the Kurdish fighters. It is unclear why President Obama chose not to twist Germany's arm to join his anti-Islamic State airstrike coalition. Commentators in Germany believe the Merkel administration

could do much more to stem Islamic State violence. **In a late September commentary in Germany's mass circulation paper *Bild*, the headline screamed, "All Talk, no action!"**

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Why Western boots should stay out of Iraq and Syria

By Denis Dragovic

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20141009-why-western-boots-should-stay-out-of-iraq-and-syria>

There are two reasons why we should ignore the growing calls in the United States, Canada and Australia for Western "boots on ground" — meaning ground troops — to fight and destroy the Islamic State (IS).

(1) The most often heard caution against engaging in urban warfare is the potential for civilian deaths, and the inevitable protracted engagement that creates resentment, which in turn feeds the propaganda machine. (2) But this article responds mainly to the second reason, which is of far greater consequence: the fact that in Iraq and Syria right now, there is no alternative group that could fill the void created by a defeated IS. So even if we could topple IS, who would govern the liberated lands?

Behind the rise of IS

The success of IS in Iraq and Syria has been dependent upon different factors.

In Iraq, the areas controlled by IS are largely Sunni Arab territories. Having benefited from Saddam Hussein's rule, the shift to democracy and an eight-year Shia government of Nouri al-Maliki has turned the tables.

The Sunni community of Iraq has been disenfranchised and in some cases persecuted by the dominant Shia through official and unofficial channels.

IS's success was only made possible by the support of this Sunni community. Any lasting solution will require Baghdad wresting that allegiance away from the black flag of IS and back to the banner of a united Iraq.

This is why Obama held out against supporting Nouri al-Maliki's efforts to retain power, recognizing the need for systematic political change.

But the new government has only shifted personalities at the highest of levels. The vast bureaucratic and military infrastructure was and remains a Shia dominated body, with positions filled through cronyism, nepotism and corruption.

It is unlikely that the change of government under Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi will mean the interests of Iraq's Sunni population are being served any better in the near future. A

root and branch review of the Iraqi public sector is required which will require a concerted political effort over many years.

Under these circumstances, arming and supporting the Shia-dominated Iraqi military to "liberate" Sunni territories is likely to cause further angst.

What comes after aerial bombing?

In the first few weeks of Iraqi operations against IS, the military was accused of indiscriminate bombings of civilian areas (subsequently halted), its Shia militias reportedly committed atrocities not dissimilar to IS, while a political settlement that responded to Sunnis concerns remains seemingly beyond reach.

This is why a military response in Iraq should be limited to aerial degrading of IS assets and militarily limiting its expansion — but not encouraging, funding or providing tactical advice to government or militia combat troops in an effort to route IS.

Instead, the long-term response should adopt a rogue state strategy by containing and isolating IS while supporting alternative Sunni groups to shift their allegiance away from IS. That's what the United States did so successfully in 2006 with the same Sunni groups.



When this shift occurs, it will be the indigenous Sunni Arabs — not foreign fighters and Islamic militants — who will hold political authority over their territory and be in a position to negotiate a sustainable settlement with Baghdad.

Hard realities in Syria

In Syria, a similar course of action is more morally ambiguous.

As we near the fifth year of the conflict there is no clear alternative to Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

The Free Syrian Army, key partners with the United States in the fight against IS, were described disparagingly only months ago by President Obama as being, “former farmers or teachers or pharmacists,” with little chance against a battle hardened regime.

Other not so appealing alternatives include al-Qaeda’s franchise in Syria, al-Nusra Front, and secessionist Kurdish fighters whose territorial gains could lead to instability in Turkey.

Within this complex web of competing interests and shifting alliances there is no viable group ready to fill the power vacuum that would emerge in northern Syria were IS to be destroyed.

Without a political succession plan, the territory currently occupied by IS would simply return to a chaotic battleground of vying rebel groups.

A deal with the devil to defeat “evil”?

If IS is what Western leaders have claimed it to be — “evil” (Obama), “uniquely evil” (Abbott) and “pure evil” (Cameron) — then the only course of action available to the international community is to work through Russia and Iran to support Bashar al-Assad in Syria.

This may already be happening. Rebels have raised complaints asking why IS and al-Nusra Front assets have been targeted while Syrian regime targets have been untouched.

Why is there no coordination with Free Syrian Army commanders on the ground? Other moderate groups have spoken out against the airstrikes, claiming that they will only help the regime.

One of the key lessons we learnt from the Afghanistan and Iraq wars is that military forays cannot succeed without a political solution. Attempting to create such a political solution only after the fact is not something that the world has proven adept at.

In the case of IS, there is currently no clear and viable political endgame. So as hard as it might be to accept for some, if defeating IS is the goal, the best solution is likely to be isolate the militants and work to weaken them from within in Iraq, while adopting a realpolitik approach to the return of Bashar al-Assad in Syria.

Denis Dragovic is Adjunct Lecturer in International Development at University of Melbourne.

EDITOR’S COMMENT: While we consume valuable time to analyze possible solutions, IS troops are advancing towards many directions both at national and international levels. Boots on the ground will cause bloodshed on both sides but no Air Force ever won a war! Perhaps an analysis of reasonings behind current turmoil (lightly mentioned in this article) might reveal possible viable solutions – even ones without boots on the ground!

Border Patrol canines are outfitted with wearable electronics

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20141010-border-patrol-canines-are-outfitted-with-wearable-electronics>

Wearable electronics are expected to generate more than \$14 billion in 2014, and the market will reach \$70 billion by 2024, according to a study by researchers at IDTechEx. Sensor-equipped wearable devices used by law enforcement agencies, including the U.S Customs and Border Patrol (CBP), represent a growing segment of the market.

In a 6 October 2014 speech in Washington, D.C., CBP Chief Technology Officer Wolf Tombe discussed the integration of wearable devices into the daily tasks performed by Border Patrol agents. Thousands of border agents are currently outfitted with smart wrist-watches, wearable



cameras, and clothing equipped with health and safety sensors capable of monitoring body temperatures and stress levels.

Tombe noted that the effectiveness of wearable devices in helping agents perform their jobs and improve safety may soon lead to wearable devices for the CBP's canine teams.



Border agents have long considered canines to be their best tool for tracking controlled substances at U.S. borders. CBP's canine program is the largest among U.S. law enforcement agencies- roughly 1,500 teams are equipped with dogs trained to detect highly

sensitive scents. "Canines are still our best sensors," Tombe said.

NextGov reports that most Border Patrol canines are outfitted with GPS-connected collars which allow border agents to keep track of their whereabouts. In the future, those same collars may contain "stress-

detection sensors" that could translate a dog's bark to its mood, which could then be transmitted to an agent's smart device.

The technology could send vital information in real-time to agents such as whether the dog is stressed or threatened. Additionally, some versions of the collar could be designed to send data via an audio or video stream.

Israel-based Bio-Sense markets to the public a collar (photo) that

interprets barks and can notify an owner if a dog "is alarmed, senses danger or is just communicating with neighbors." The same collar transmits the information via SMS message or a cellular call.

Middle East conflicts threaten crop ancestors key to food security, scientists warn

Source: <http://www.trust.org/item/20140908095829-7eyzt>

Plant scientists are planning to conserve the wild relatives of important food crops in their natural habitats, but face a barrier because a significant proportion are found in conflict zones in the Middle East, including Syria and Iraq.

Scientists from the University of Birmingham have identified "hotspots" around the globe where crop wild relatives – species plant breeders use to develop new crop varieties that are more resistant to climate extremes, pests and diseases – could be protected on the ground. That would help secure future global food resources.

Globally these wild relatives are most concentrated in the region known as the **"Fertile Crescent"**, which arcs around the Arabian desert and includes Jordan, the

Palestinian territories, Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Iran.

Conflict in some of these countries - with parts held by extremist Muslim groups - makes in-situ conservation very difficult in practice, Nigel Maxted, lead investigator from the University of Birmingham's School of Biosciences in Britain, told Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"It won't necessarily speed up extinction of the species, but the problem is access," he said. "If Islamic State takes over an area, then we don't have access to the (plant) material there."

Syria is a case in point. Two of the most important sites in the world for wild relatives of crops - including wheat and sugar beet - are located in the war-torn country, according to Maxted.



The International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) has been

around the world, as well as taking samples and placing them in gene banks as a back-up.



forced to duplicate a globally unique collection of crop genetic resources that were kept at its gene bank in Aleppo, in Syria, by shipping seeds to the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway where they can be kept safe.

They plan to negotiate with governments in the Fertile Crescent to highlight the plight of the species, and to try to implement conservation in the hotspot areas. But Maxted said it won't be possible in Syria for the time being.



Government support needed

The Birmingham university team is joining with the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) to plan and implement effective conservation of crop wild relatives for the first time in the countries where they are found

Another challenge is that these wild relatives of crops are concentrated in developing countries, which often lack the skills and resources to protect them properly, Maxted said, stressing the need for new funding for such efforts.



They are increasingly important because the growing risks to crops from climate change

relative of sugar cane, can survive very low temperatures, and *Prunus ferganensis*, a



means there is rising demand from plant breeders for resilient traits that are found in wild relatives.

For example, *Saccharum arundinaceum*, a



wild relative of peach, is tolerant to drought conditions. A wild relative of wheat, *Aegilops tauschii*, is resistant to Hessian fly, a pest of cereal crops.

But research at Birmingham shows that 12 percent of crop wild relatives are threatened with extinction, and all are likely to be already suffering a loss of genetic diversity for reasons including habitat destruction and alteration, conflict, intensive agriculture and urbanisation. Conserving them in the locations where they are naturally found is important because it means they can continue to adapt to changing climatic conditions, as well as threats from pests and diseases, Maxted said.

"If we combine global population growth with the prospect of climate change decreasing crop yields by 2 percent per decade, crop wild relatives may be one solution to this food security threat - but not if we don't have access to them or the species are extinct," he said.

Isis magazine Dabiq Threatens 'Rome Crusaders' Flying Islamic State Flag at Vatican on Front Cover

Source: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/isis-magazine-dabiq-threatens-rome-crusaders-flying-islamic-state-flag-vatican-front-cover-1469712>

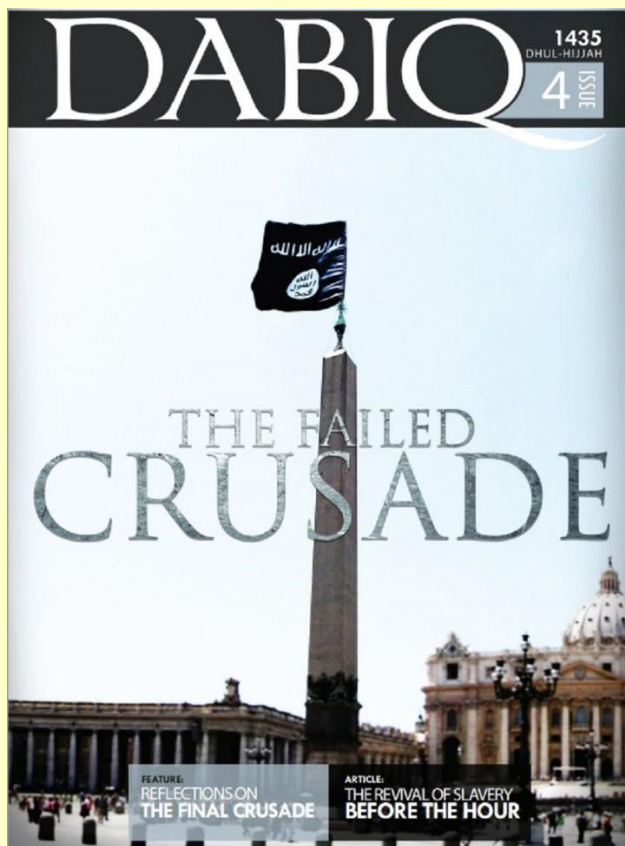
The Islamic State (IS) group renewed propagandist threats against Rome and the Vatican in a new issue of its official magazine, which had a Photoshopped picture of a jihadi flag flying atop the Holy See on the front cover. The extremist group formerly known as Isis has tried to characterise a US-led effort to counter

its advance in Iraq and Syria as a religious war akin to medieval Christian crusades. According to the group's rhetoric, all westerners are offspring of the cradle of Christianity, Rome, which in turn becomes a symbolic target.



IS reaffirmed such credo in the fourth issue of its English language magazine, Dabiq, which ran a cover story titled The Failed Crusade. "Rome in the Arabic tongue of the Prophet refers to the Christians of Europe and their colonies in Shām [Greater Syria]," the article read.

It was accompanied by a picture depicting



IS's black flag risen atop the Egyptian obelisk at the centre of St. Peter's Square, in the Vatican.

The magazine reproduced parts of an earlier statement attributed to IS spokesman

Mohammed al-Adnani, claiming jihadists will one day conquer Rome.

"We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women, by the permission of Allah, the Exalted," Al-Adnani said. "If we do not reach that time, then our children and grandchildren will reach it, and they will sell your sons as slaves at the slave market."

In the last section of the 12-page piece, the Islamist militants' mouthpiece called on jihadi sympathisers across the world to attack westerners "wherever they can be found."

"At this point of the crusade against the Islamic State, it is very important that attacks take place in every country that has entered into the alliance against the Islamic State, especially the US, [the] UK, France, Australia and Germany," the article read.

"Every Muslim should get out of his house, find a crusader and kill him ... And the Islamic State will remain until its banner flies over Rome."

Rome was first singled out as a target also by IS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi in its first statement since the group changed name from Isis to an Islamic "caliphate" earlier this year.

Baghdadi's Ramadan message was followed by rumours of possible attacks against the Vatican and Pope Francis that were played down by the Holy See.

IS militants have been accused of atrocities including crucifixions, torture and summary executions carried out against Western journalists and aid workers as well as religious minorities and fellow Muslims.

UPDATE: Moroccan Secret Services neutered terrorist cell of Islamic State intended to attack Milan subway system, Sant'Antonio Church (Padova) and San Petronio Church (Bologna)

Source: <http://www.ilgiornale.it/news/mondo/sventato-attacco-terrorista-metropolitana-milano-1059440.html>

Why San Petronio?

Since 2001, Muslim leaders in Italy are demanding the removal or destruction of a priceless 15th century fresco in Bologna that they say offends Islam by showing the Prophet Muhammad being cast into the flames of Hell.

The row over *The Last Judgment* by Giovanni da Modena, in Bologna Cathedral, could threaten the already strained relations between the Roman Catholic Church and members of Italy's Muslim community.

The recently established Union of Italian Muslims has written to the Pope and Cardinal Giacomo Biffi, the outspoken conservative Archbishop of Bologna, complaining that the fresco shows clearly Muhammad, the founder of Islam, among those condemned to burn



in eternal flames.

The protesters said that Giovanni da Modena had shown Muhammad being “thrown into hell, completely naked, with a snake wrapped around his body and a demon next to him about to torture him”. They said that Muslims had never depicted Jesus or the Virgin Mary on the walls of a mosque. In the letter they called for the “barbarous” fresco to be removed from the wall of the Bolognini chapel, inside the 14th-century cathedral of San Petronio.



The Aussie Way!

... on illegal immigration



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Islamic State's Global Affiliates

Source: <http://intelcenter.com/maps/is-affiliates-map.html>

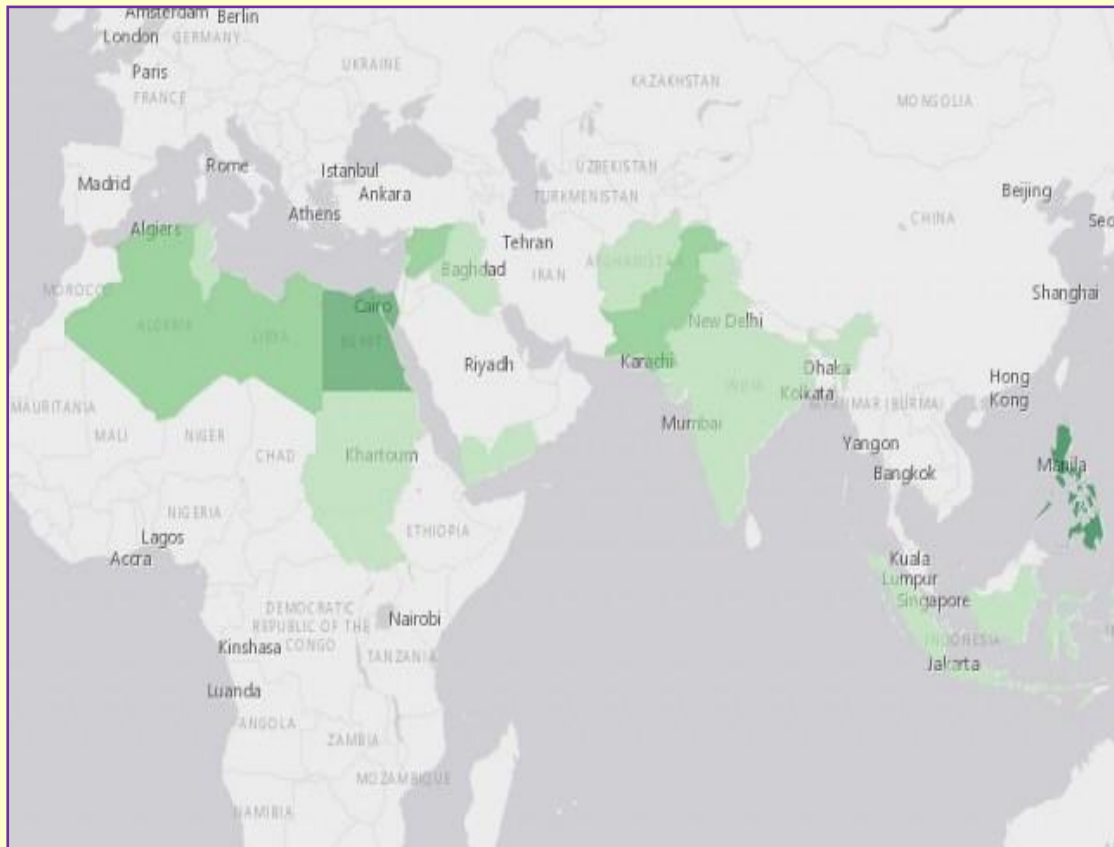
Following the creation of the Islamic State (IS), Emir Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi called for jihadi groups around the world to pledge allegiance to IS. Below are lists of jihadi groups that have pledged allegiance/support as of 9 Oct. 2014.

SUPPORT/PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO IS

- al-l'tisam of the Koran and Sunnah [Sudan]
- Abu Sayyaf Group [Philippines]
- Ansar al-Khilafah [Philippines]
- Ansar al-Tawheed in India [India]



- Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) [Phillippines]
- Bangsmoro Justice Movement (BJM) [Phillippines]
- Heroes of Islam Brigade in Khorasan [Afghanistan]
- al-Huda Battalion in Maghreb of Islam [Algeria]
- The Soldiers of the Caliphate in Algeria [Algeria]
- Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) [Pakistan]
- Islamic Youth Shura Council [Libya]
- Jaish al-Sahabah in the Levant [Syria]
- Jamaat Ansar Bait al-Maqdis [Egypt]
- Jund al-Khilafah in Egypt [Egypt]



- Liwa Ahrar al-Sunna in Baalbek [Lebanon]
- Lions of Libya [Libya] (Unconfirmed)
- Mujahideen Indonesia East Timor (MIT) [Indonesia]
- Mujahideen Shura Council in the Environs of Jerusalem (MSCJ) [Egypt]
- Tehreek-e-Khilafat [Pakistan]
- Okba Ibn Nafaa Battalion [Tunisia]
- Supporters for the Islamic State in Yemen [Yemen]
- al-Tawheed Brigade in Khorasan [Afghanistan]

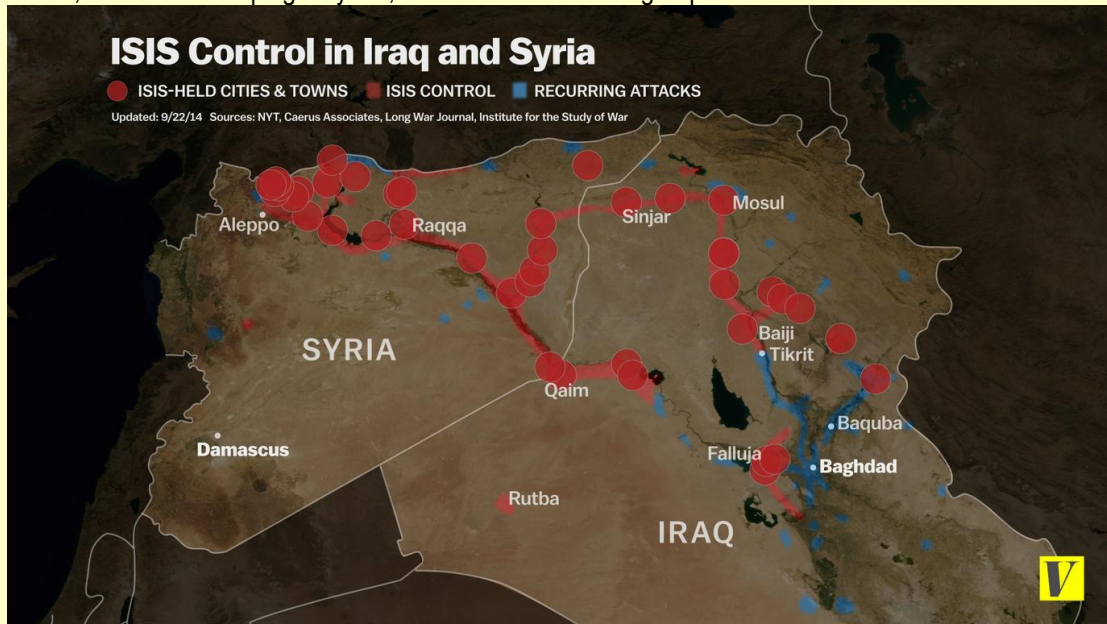
ISIS territory in Syria and Iraq, Sept. 2014

Source: <http://www.vox.com/2014/9/25/6843611/14-maps-that-explain-isis>

With its base secure in eastern Syria, this summer ISIS launched a massive invasion of Iraq's Sunni regions, its original home as AQI. It now controls a vast stretch of territory the size of Belgium, from the edges of Syria's dense western cities all the way to the outskirts of Baghdad, creating an unofficially autonomous Sunni zone that has effectively erased the Syria-Iraq border. The group's headquarters are in Raqqa, a Syrian city, but it also controls Mosul, one of Iraq's largest cities, and many others. To control and govern these cities is an astounding feat,

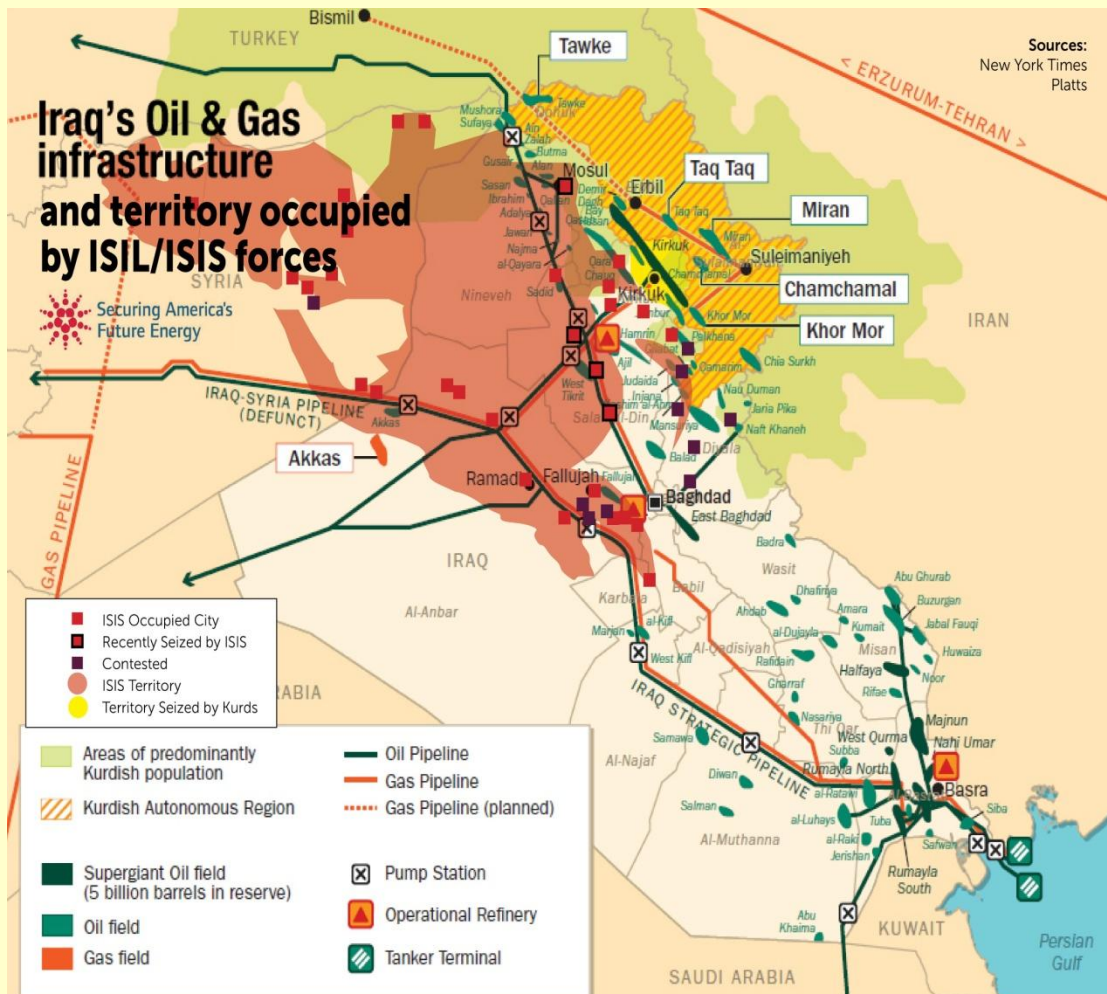


one that provides ISIS with a revenue base and plenty of operational centers, but it's also a weakness as it leaves ISIS reliant on the acquiescence of this population. Should Sunnis in these cities rise up en masse, as the US is hoping they will, it could drive back the group.



Energy resources in ISIS territory

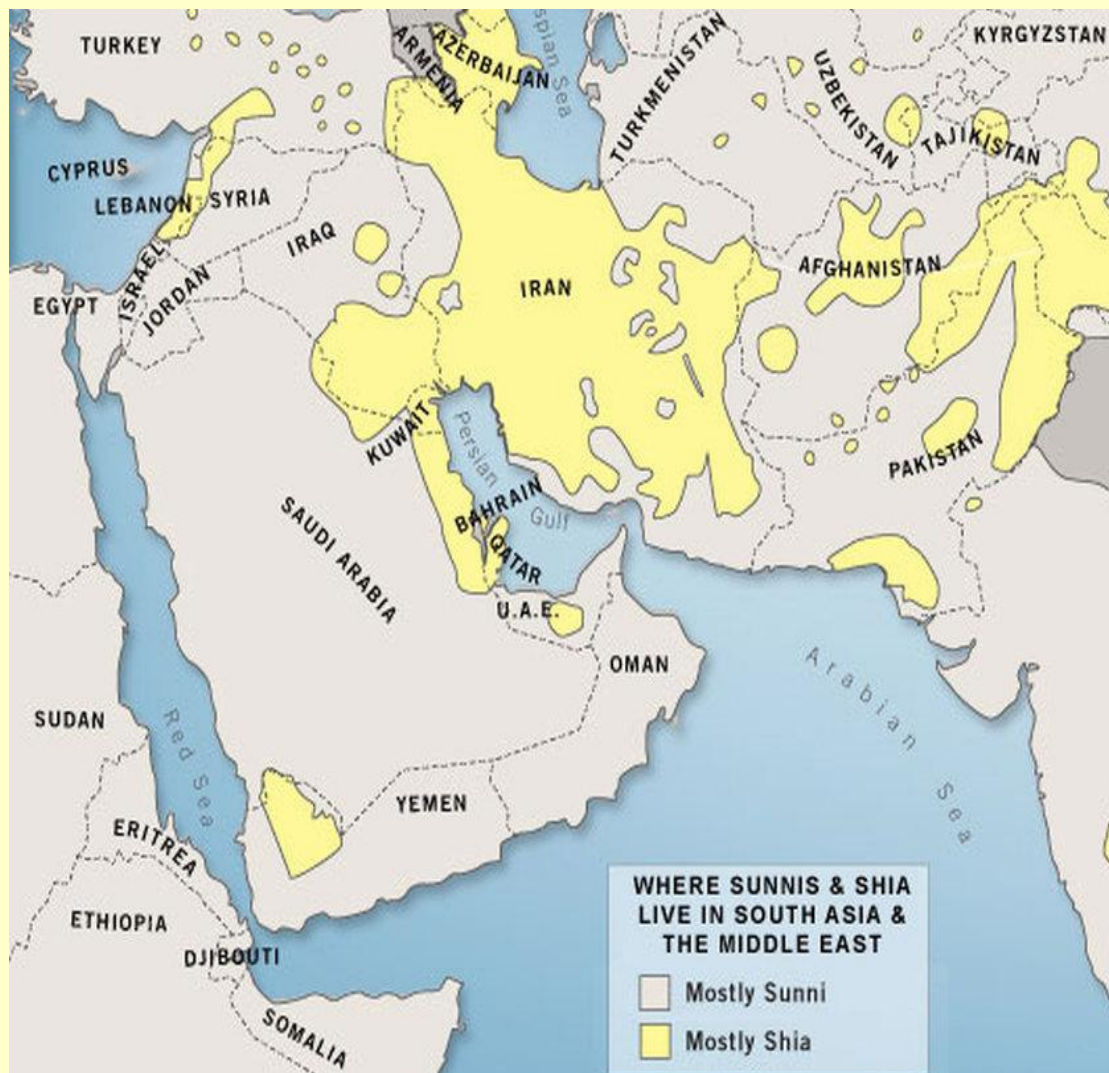
Syria is not a super-oil-rich country, and most of Iraq's oil is in the south beyond ISIS's reach. But the group still controls an awful lot of land with not just oil but important oil infrastructure, especially



pipelines and refineries. This has plugged ISIS directly into the global energy market, allowing them to develop a mini oil economy, with which they can fund their rampage as well as buy off locals who felt that the Iraqi and Syrian governments were depriving them of their fair share. The US and others are bombing this infrastructure, hoping to stem ISIS's income, but the fact that there is even any oil income to cut off is astounding and, in itself, a sign of ISIS' scope.

The Sunni-Shia divide

Now let's zoom out and look at just the concentrations of Sunni and Shia Muslims across the Middle



East. Sunnis and Shias have not, despite what some people say, been at conflict with one another for centuries; this sense of sectarian hatred is recent. But it does matter a great deal today, particularly for ISIS, and that has to do with where Shias, the smaller of the two sects, are concentrated. They have a large enough majority in Iraq to rule, and the post-Saddam Shia government has not respected Sunnis. In Syria, meanwhile, the Shia minority in power has long abused the Sunni majority. So there is a sense of Sunni dispossession in both countries. Meanwhile, the governments in the region have divided between Shia governments and Sunni governments, driven in part by Sunni-led Saudi Arabia and Shia-led Iran, which see themselves as being in a regional struggle for hegemony that has fallen along sectarian lines. That has played out especially in Syria, with Iran backing the government and Saudi Arabia backing the rebels, which eventually gave rise to ISIS.

► At source's URL you will find 14 maps explaining the background of current spread of ISIS in the area.

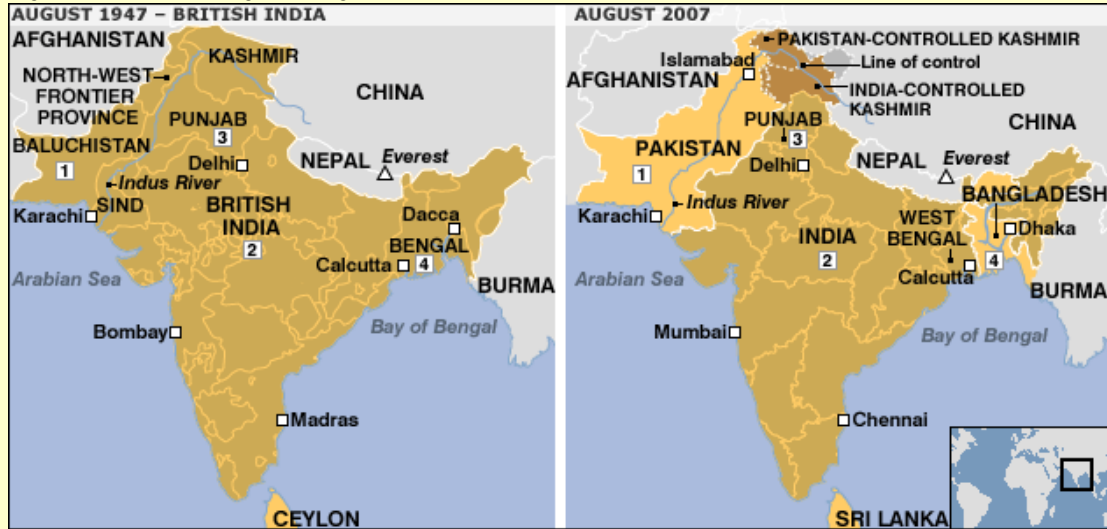


Beware Indians, terrorism on rise in India: ISIS flags seen in Kashmir

Source: <http://news.oneindia.in/india/isis-flags-seen-in-kashmir-danger-for-india-terrorism-on-rise-1539764.html>

October 13 – Beware Indians, terrorism on rise in the country.

As it was reported earlier, Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) might have begun to spread its wing in India. Flags of the terror outfit have been seen in across the country, especially in Kashmir. The first time, when ISIS flags were seen in India, was on June 27. Despite all precautionary effort by Indian security agencies and intelligence bureau, ISIS flags have been noticed once again during a rally at the Idgah Maidan in Srinagar during Eid celebrations on Sept 29.



Security agencies were put on high alert as masked men were seen waving IS flags and shouting slogans in Kashmir. General Officer Commanding (GoC) of the Army's Srinagar based 15 Corps, Lt Gen Subrata Saha was quoted as saying, "Certainly, we are watching and closely monitoring the situation as it were." "As per my inputs, there was one incident of the kind that you refer to that of the (IS) flag. We are watching the situation as this is something which merits the highest concern of all security agencies and let me tell you that it is getting the attention of all the security agencies," he added. Meanwhile, media reports also claimed that Intelligence Bureau (IB) held a high level meeting in Delhi to discuss the issue. Presence of ISIS in India created panic among people as it was reported earlier that the terror outfit has been recruiting young men from the country via internet.

It can be recalled that 4 young men from Maharashtra allegedly had joined ISIS after being indoctrinated online. One of them lost his life during Syria violence. Two men from Tamil Nadu were also arrested for allegedly ordering and distributing t-shirts with the Islamic State emblem - a group photo of young men wearing the shirts went viral, triggering uproar.

How long can India ignore the Taliban?

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2014/10/how-long-can-india-ignore-taliban.html>

After a decade of deft manoeuvring in Afghanistan with its successful aid policy, New Delhi has taken its eye off the ball.

While Washington tries hard to nudge Mullah Omar into sharing power in Afghanistan -- a political watershed in a decade-long war -- our mandarins have chosen to pooh-pooh the process.

Taking cover behind the Mullah Akhtar Mansour fiasco -- when a "senior Taliban leader" was flown by the Royal Air Force from Pakistan to Kabul last November for peace talks, but turned out to be a money-seeking impostor -- Indian officials dismiss any thought of opening their own track



to the Taliban with the toss-off: "Who knows who we would end up talking to?"

But, as I discovered during a recent visit to Kabul, the dialogue with the Taliban is being seriously pursued and it is captivating everyone who matters: the insurgents, the Afghan polity and government, the Americans, the United Nations and practically every Afghan who has time left over from scrabbling together a livelihood

Lutfullah Mashal from the National Directorate of Security, Afghanistan's key intelligence agency, told me that American negotiators have met Mullah Omar's representatives, including Syed Taib Agha, a Taliban ambassador-at-large.

Besides Agha, the dialogue has also featured Qudratullah Jamal, formerly Mullah Omar's minister for information and culture.

Admittedly, Mullah Omar himself has remained invisible, but that is not necessarily suspicious; negotiating is something that Omar disdains. As Mashal says, "Nobody has seen Mullah Omar, nobody has talked to him, but his trusted people are talking."

This dialogue, however, has created discord between Mullah Omar's Quetta Shoorā and Pakistan. Taliban sources lament that Pakistani pressure is forcing Omar to engage with the Americans. Without that, he would be little disposed to talk, being increasingly confident of outlasting the coalition forces in Afghanistan.

Given the Quetta Shoorā's single-point agenda of forcing foreign forces out of Afghanistan, negotiating with the Americans is a humiliating climb-down.

But Islamabad, with its feet held to the fire by Washington, has bluntly told Omar that dialogue is essential, if only to stave off US pressure. But this is a serious loss of face for the Taliban and confuses its rank and file.

Mullah Abdul Salam Zaeef, the Taliban's representative to Pakistan until Islamabad handed him over to Washington for an extended stay in Guantanamo Bay, is among those who best understand the Taliban's complex relationship with Pakistan.

Zaeef points to the growing contradiction between the Taliban's uncompromising rejection of foreign occupation on the one hand; and on the other, Islamabad's weak-kneed acceptance of American drone attacks and Special Forces operations on its territory.

Pakistan has also arrested, and handed over to America, dozens of senior Taliban leaders over

the last decade. A proud Pashtun like Omar resents being coerced into dialogue by what he considers a duplicitous and craven government.

Says another Talib: "We are angrier today at Pakistan than America. Pakistan is playing a double game, telling the Muslims that we are looking after your interests but actually they are working for America. Thousands of Taliban are in jails in Pakistan even today."

AfPak watchers know that Taliban-Pakistan relations were hardly smooth when Omar called the shots in Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001. Now, however, uneasy coexistence is giving way to deep bitterness within the Taliban.

This widening fault line provides South Block an opportunity to transform its traditional power calculus in the AfPak region, which unquestioningly lumps Mullah Omar and the Quetta Shoorā with the ISI-military combine.

There seems little recognition of Mullah Omar's impending collision with Islamabad; nor that "the Taliban" that the ISI mobilises against Indians in Afghanistan belong to the Haqqani network, which Pakistan maintains far more lovingly than the Quetta Shoorā.

Divide and rule is standard ISI practice; during the anti-Soviet jihad, it had presided over seven Afghan mujahideen factions, playing one against the other. Today, the ISI effectively maintains two Afghan Taliban by keeping the Haqqani network functionally and financially autonomous from the Quetta Shoorā. But, despite the fear that the Haqqani network generates with its suicide strikes and Al Qaeda linkages, Mullah Omar remains the spiritual and symbolic leader of the Taliban, the Amir-ul-Momineen (Commander of the Faithful).

With his uncomplicated agenda (freeing Afghanistan of foreigners); his straightforward methods (gun-toting insurgency rather than suicide bombings); and his growing disenchantment with Pakistan, he represents a real opportunity for an Indian overture.

But ideology invariably trumps realism within the Indian establishment; anyone who deals with the ISI is surely the enemy!

Abdul Hakim Mujahid, a former senior Talib official, now deputy head of the High Peace Council, provides the obvious context. **"The Taliban are in the battlefield against the world's greatest power, which heads of a coalition of 48 countries.**



They will take the support of anyone who could support them Pakistan; the Indian government; or the Iranian or Chinese government. This is the nature of the battlefield."

New Delhi's dialogue with Mullah Omar will not be easy.

Omar knows that India supported the hated Afghan communists; then the Soviet Union invaders; then the mujahideen factions that

battled the Taliban; and then the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance.

Furthermore, the fissures between Pakistan and the Taliban may not turn out wide enough to exploit. But as South Block prepares for a post-2014 AfPak, it would be a strategic blunder to not even have tried to open communications with a major player in the Great Game.



Al Qaeda-ISIS may launch joint terror attack on India

Source: http://zeenews.india.com/news/india/al-qaeda-isis-may-launch-joint-terror-attack-on-india-nsg-chief_1485571.html

October 17 – **The Director General of National Security Guards (NSG) Jayant Choudhury, Thursday, warned of a joint plan by al Qaeda and ISIS to target Indian cities.**

Speaking to reporters after NSG's 30th raising day celebrations, Choudhury said, "Now that they (al Qaeda) have declared an intention to attack India, they might combine with outfits like Lashkar-e-Toiba, ISIS and Indian Mujahideen."



"If they do have combined operations, we have to prepare for multi-city, multiple terror attacks," he said, adding that tourist hubs like Goa, Bangalore and Amritsar are on the terror radar.

Choudhury said, "Terrorism has become more grim, what happened in Mumbai on 26/11 was a curtain raiser."

Stressing that the NSG is fully prepared, he said, "NSG will respond to whatever required, whenever

required."



The NSG DG's warning on the possibility of a terror attack in India comes days after intelligence agencies warned of a plan by the al Qaeda to target India during the festive season.

As per intelligence agencies, Qaeda has joined forces with banned organisation SIMI to execute its nefarious plan in India.

With Indian Mujahideen left with little muscle, al Qaeda looked for a new partner and found it in the shape of SIMI, which has a pan-India network. Investigators are said to have found

evidence of the new nexus while probing the recent Burdwan and Bijnor bombings.

Al Qaeda chief Ayman al-Zawahri had announced on September 4 the forming of the group's wing in the country, by promising in a video posted online the need to spread Islamic rule and "raise the flag of jihad" across the "Indian subcontinent".

Also, the emergence of Islamic State flags in Kashmir has left the security establishment worried.



Islamic State: Former Iraqi pilots training militants to fly captured war planes

Source: <http://www.terrorismwatch.org/2014/10/islamic-state-former-iraqi-pilots.html>

Former Iraqi pilots who have now joined Islamic State (IS) militants in Syria are training members of the group to fly captured fighter jets, a group monitoring the war said on Friday.

It is believed to be the first time the militant group has taken to the air.

The group has been flying the three planes over the captured al-Jarrah Syrian military airport east of Aleppo, Rami Abdulrahman, who runs the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said, citing witnesses in Syria's northern Aleppo province.



"They have trainers, Iraqi officers who were pilots before for [former Iraqi president] Saddam Hussein," he said.

"People saw the flights, they went up many times from the airport and they are flying in the skies outside the airport and coming back."

It was not clear whether the jets were equipped with weaponry or whether the pilots could fly longer distances in the aircraft, which witnesses said **appeared to be MiG 21 (photo) or**

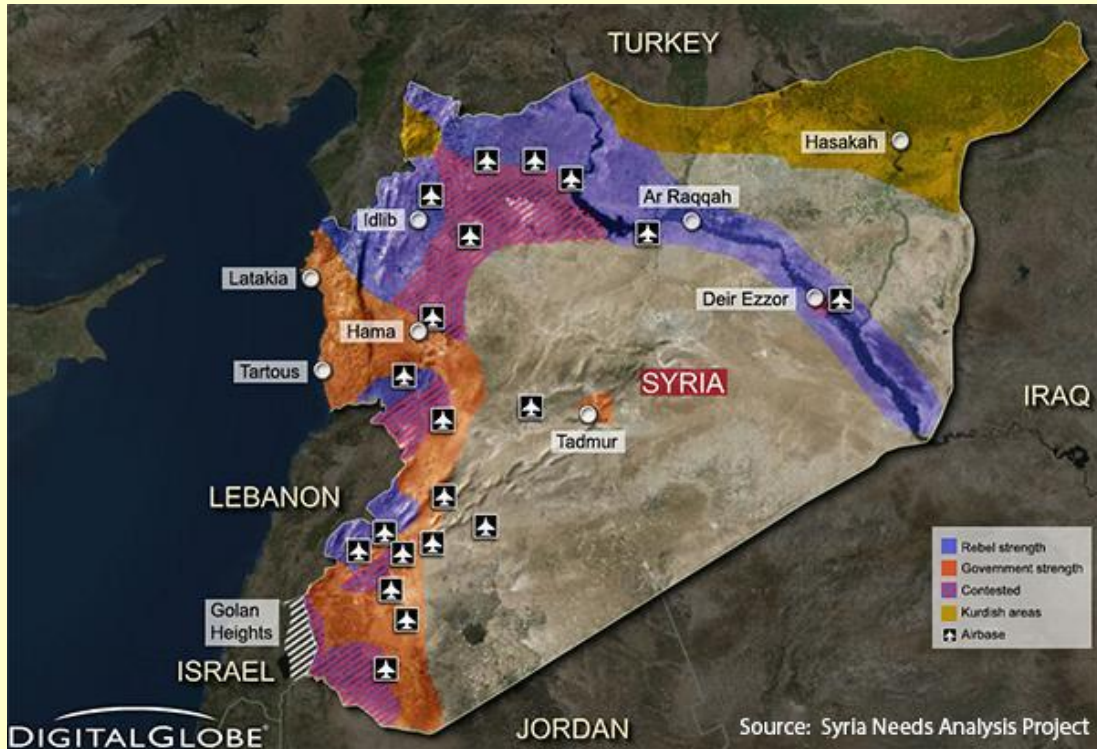
MiG 23 warplanes

captured from the Syrian military.

Pro-Islamic State Twitter accounts had previously posted pictures of captured jets in other parts of Syria, but the aircraft had appeared unusable, according to analysts and diplomats.

The countryside east of Aleppo city is one of the main bases for Islamic State militants in Syria, where the al Qaeda offshoot controls up to a third of the country's territory.





The group has seized tracts of territory in Syria and neighbouring Iraq.



EDITOR'S COMMENT: Another fishy story! Warplanes need airfields to take off. If there are no airfields they pose no threat. Why nobody pre-emptively bomb these airfields? Somebody! Unless they are fond of surprises such as airbombing or suicidal flights against critical infrastructure or big vessels – to name just a few. Of course planes are not cars to learn how to drive in just a few lessons. But what if jihadist are fast learners?



Ceremony blesses site of replacement for church destroyed in 9/11 attacks

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2014/oct/18/ceremony-blesses-site-replacement-church-destroyed-911-attacks>

A procession of church leaders and others walks to a groundbreaking for the St Nicholas National Shrine on Saturday. Photograph: Craig Ruttle/AP



Church and government officials gathered in New York City on Saturday to bless the site of a church that will replace the only house of worship destroyed in the September 11 attacks.

St Nicholas Greek Orthodox church was destroyed when the World Trade Center towers collapsed on 11 September 2001. After more than a decade of discussions between the Greek Orthodox church and Port Authority, which owns the World Trade Center site, the parties agreed to build the new church near its former



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location, overlooking the 9/11 memorial.

“It will be a place of faith, a place of peace and a place of solace and hope,” Archbishop Demetrios, leader of the Greek Orthodox church in America, said in a statement.

The New St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church at Ground Zero
 a National Shrine of our Holy Archdiocese and a place of pilgrimage for our Nation and the whole world.

Demetrios presided over Saturday's service, which included a blessing of the site and a service of thanksgiving. He told the crowd that the building aims to be a refuge regardless of whether its users are members of the church.

The Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava designed the \$38m



structure which will be built on the site, which is known as the St Nicholas National Shrine. Funding has come from donations across the world, including a \$260,000 payment from the Greek



government, church officials said. The domed white building, inspired by the Cathedral Church of Hagia Sophia and the Church of Our Saviour at Chora, is expected to be finished in 2016 or early 2017. "This is what I want; this is what the church wants: a very ecumenical place. They would like to have 24 hours the church open," Calatrava told the Wall Street Journal. Calatrava was also selected to design Port Authority's \$4bn transportation building at the World Trade Center site. Greek immigrants founded the church in 1916 and began services there in 1922. Construction of the new facility has been marked by arguments between the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America, Port Authority and others over the land and building costs. **In 2011, the church agreed to exchange its original land for a space close to the National September 11 Memorial Museum.**

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EDITOR'S COMMENT: Perhaps I have become too suspicious but I think that The Guardian should have paid more attention to the title of this article. It is not just any church. It is an Orthodox Christian church! It seems that the overall religious attitude is slowly changing in the British Empire and the desire to kee equal distances with other religious entities is growing rapidly... Of course I could be wrong but...

The Best Film About Islamic Terrorists Is a Comedy

Source: http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2014/10/the-best-film-about-islamic-terrorists-is-a-comedy/381640/?single_page=true

It's been four years since the general U.S. release of *Four Lions*, Chris Morris' pitch-black satire about a crew of inept wannabe suicide bombers in the north of England, and almost five since the movie debuted at Sundance. Since then, as many as 500 British citizens have left their homes to join ISIS, the terrorist

group seeking to establish a fundamentalist Islamic caliphate in the Middle East, with one 21-year-old British national, Hamzah Parvez, sending an online message home to fellow Muslims urging them to join him. "Are we content with eating



Nando's every week?" Parvez asks, referring to the inexpensive Portuguese chicken chain ubiquitous on British high streets. "Come to the land of jihad and shout Allah."

The jihadi preoccupation with fried chicken features in *Four Lions*' opening scene, where ringleader Omar (Riz Ahmed) and his exceptionally dimwitted friend Waj (Kayvan Novak) are attempting to film propaganda videos railing against decadent Western imperialism. As Omar starts to use the Big Mac as a metaphor for cultural degradation, Waj interrupts: "Flippin' idiots. You could have gone Chicken Cottage, proper halal, bargain bucket, \$6.99."

Four Lions takes Charlie Chaplin's quote about life being a tragedy in close-up and a comedy

release of *Four Lions* in 2010 he refused



virtually all interview requests as a matter of course, and has stayed out of the spotlight ever since, although he occasionally flies to Baltimore to direct episodes of *Veep* for Armando Iannucci (the pair collaborated on the spoof 1994 news show *The Day Today*). But during the period Morris was promoting *Four Lions*, his debut feature film, he gave unprecedented access to the media, talking over and over again about his motivations for making the movie. "It wasn't about getting the least likely subject for a comedy and then



in long-shot and inverts it. As a concept, terrorism goes beyond abhorrence, but the day-to-day intricacies of it are another story, like the tale Morris tells about how Khalid Sheikh Mohammed once held up a television interview for two hours because he was trying to find an outfit that didn't make him look fat, or the British jihadists who ordered *Islam for Dummies* from Amazon before they left for Syria. While public instinct is usually to mythologize terrorists as fearsome bearers of impossible doom, frequently the reality, as Morris deftly demonstrates, is far less imposing.

52-year-old Morris is a cult figure in the U.K., partly because of his iconoclastic takes on subjects like pedophilia and drugs in the satirical news show *Brass Eye*, and partly because of his reclusiveness. Prior to the

making a film about it, but the other way round," he told *The New York Times*. "I wanted to understand what was going on. Once I started reading I found things that made me laugh."

Waj, simple-minded Faisal (Adeel Akhtar), and wannabe rapper Hassan (Arsher Ali) seem motivated more by the promise of glory and a fast-tracked, "sweet VIP lounge" route to heaven than by any particular deference to Allah, whose name is rarely invoked in the film. Instead, martyrdom is more a mission to one-up *kafirs*, who aren't so much unbelievers as straw enemies. "Our plan is, right, to put a bomb on a crow and fly it into one of them towers filled with Jews and slags," says Faisal. "Let's do Boots," says Waj, referring to the drugstore chain. "They sell



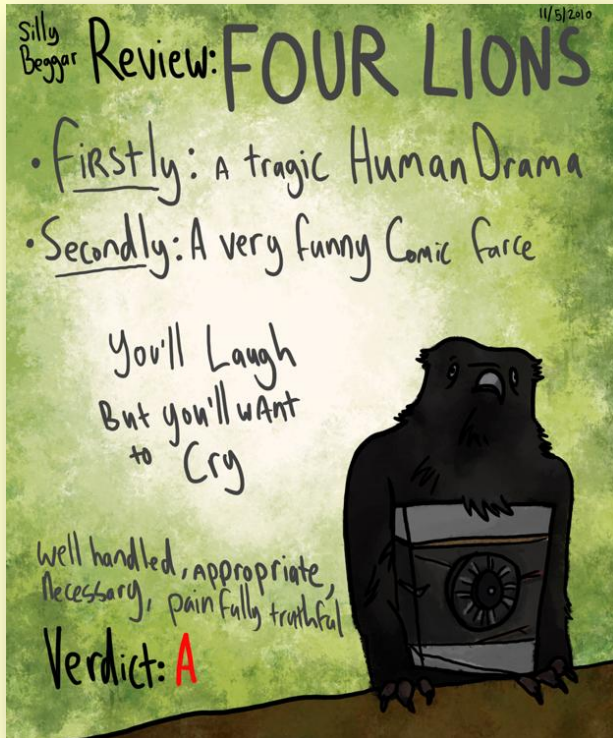
condoms that make you wanna bang white girls." In a furious invective against British culture, Omar rails against a lengthy list of enemies, including upmarket grocery stores, torture, Disneyland, dead Afghanis, and Gordon Ramsay.

The "lions" in the movie are four disaffected British men of Pakistani heritage and one white convert to Islam, Barry (Nigel Lindsay), who seems to be pursuing jihad as an outlet for his psychotically violent tendencies. None is

vignettes and stream-of-consciousness absurdity tended to be more jarring than funny. During a scene in which Omar's brother is interrogated, a stern-looking policeman tells him, "We know a lot more than you think we do," before pulling a Weetabix biscuit out and brandishing it at him—a neat encapsulation of how ham-fisted British authorities can be when it comes to tackling home-grown terror. When Barry places screws methodically in a bomb, he names each one for a chosen enemy, muttering, "Jew. Gay. Fed. Sodomite. Gynecologist. Leonard Cohen."

Many of the film's references carry even more weight now than they did five years ago: Omar criticizes Barry for trying to set up the Islamic State of Tinsley (an English suburb), and later films a propaganda video in front of a black and white flag. The ultimate location for the group's terror plot (spoilers ahead) is the London marathon, in scenes that feel eerie to watch after Boston. When Omar and Waj fly to Pakistan to join a terrorist training camp, Waj films himself on his cellphone brandishing a machine gun so he can send videos home in which he's spraying bullets and billing himself as "Paki Rambo." There's even a guest appearance from a younger Benedict Cumberbatch playing a truly ineffectual hostage negotiator.

Morris has described his characters as *Dad's Army* terrorists: bumbling, incompetent, and prone to mistakes, but they're also just as isolated, aware of their own limitations, and desperate for glory as the World War II Home Guard was. Morris never specifies who or what has radicalized them, but he's clear on what makes each so susceptible to the vague promises of an inspiring and chastising figurehead, whether that's Omar or a preacher on YouTube. Even in its darkest moments—like Chekhov's bomb-vest, no improvised explosive device goes undetonated—the film resists the urge to blindly condemn each character (with the possible exception of Barry, who's truly a total nutjob). "I'm sorry lads," says Waj, as he faces a battalion of armed police. "I don't really know what I'm doing." He isn't the only one.



particularly religious—Barry on more than one occasion suggests a mosque as a target for their attacks—and all seem to be almost catatonically stupid, except for Omar, even though he himself gets inspiration not from the Koran but from *The Lion King*. Omar's secular life in a comfortable house with his beautiful wife, Sofia (Preeya Kalidas), and his adorable son is deliberately juxtaposed with that of his brother, Mahmood (Mohammad Aqil), a deeply religious Muslim who tries to warn Omar away from violence but is criticized by Sofia for locking his own wife in a cupboard.

Morris' style as a writer and performer stretches from satirical to surreal, and the mix oddly seems to gel better with the subject matter in *Four Lions* than it did in previous works like *Jam*, where the fusion of dream-like

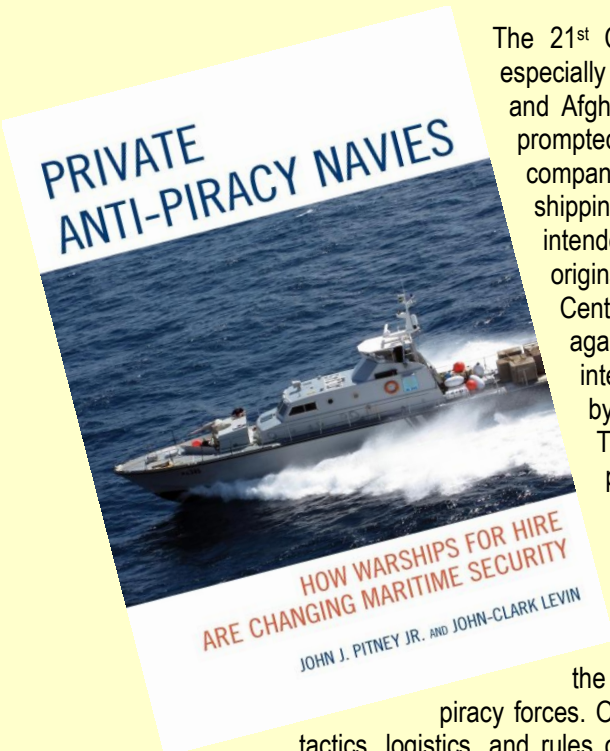


Private Anti-Piracy Navies: How Warships for Hire are Changing Maritime Security

Hardcover – December 12, 2013

By John J. Pitney Jr. Roy P. Crocker Professor of American Politics (Author) and John-Clark Levin (Author)

Source: http://www.amazon.com/Private-Anti-Piracy-Navies-Warships-Changing/dp/0739173324/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1411773693&sr=8-1&keywords=anti-piracy+navies



The 21st Century has seen a sharp rise in privatization of the military, especially of logistics and security functions during the U.S.-led wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The outbreak of Somali piracy that started in 2008 has prompted a similar revolution in maritime security. Private security companies began operating armed escort vessels to protect merchant shipping against pirates off the Horn of Africa. *Private Anti-Piracy Navies* is intended to provide a contextualized understanding of the historical origins, current state, and future prospects of this fast-changing sector. Centuries ago, the British East India Company used a private navy against piracy in the same waters with much success. Yet since then, international law has evolved to more tightly regulate the use of force by civilians, and to afford greater protections to suspected pirates. Thus, the development of what are in effect private warships has presented numerous legal and regulatory problems. How can the companies that operate these vessels be effectively licensed? Under what circumstances should they be allowed to use lethal force? This book explains how regulators in industry and government have attempted to answer such questions, and highlights the remaining areas of uncertainty. It also addresses

the economic factors that drive the struggle between pirates and anti-piracy forces. Of equal concern are operational considerations such as defensive tactics, logistics, and rules of engagement. Security companies must carefully balance rights concerns against the need to defend ships effectively.

Partly due to the contribution of private security, piracy in the Indian Ocean has dropped significantly over the past two years, leading to widespread overconfidence. Governments under severe budget pressure may withdraw their naval task forces from the region prematurely, leading to a resurgence of Somali piracy. At the same time, pirates are wreaking havoc in the Gulf of Guinea off West Africa. The book concludes with an assessment of private naval forces' prospects in these conflicts over the short term, as well as the implications for wider naval privatization in the long run.

Piracy and maritime robbery on the rise again in Southeast Asia

Source: <http://www.lowyinterpreter.org/post/2014/10/16/Piracy-hijackings-maritime-robbery-on-rise-Southeast-Asia.aspx>

October 16 - "They put knives on our throats and threatened to kill us if we resist," the deputy captain of a Vietnamese-flagged ship told reporters after his oil tanker was hijacked earlier this month. It was the twelfth hijacking attempt since April around the Malacca Straits, and the fifth successful attempt in the region in the past three months.

A report released this month by maritime intelligence firm Dryad **found that Southeast Asia was the world's hotspot for maritime attacks in the third quarter of this year.**

While the majority of these were of lower intensity – **robbery** – the number is sure to worry shipping firms as the cost of their insurance premiums for operating in the region could be pushed upwards.

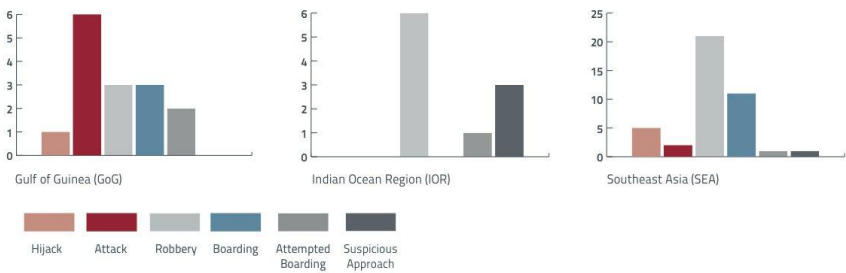


DRYAD MARITIME

Dryad Maritime is a maritime operations company with a high-grade intelligence capability.



Figures by high risk area: July to September 2014



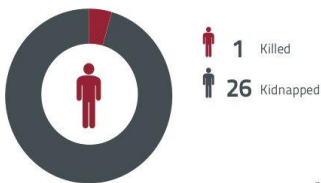
Total number of attacks by region, Year to Date

Dryad figures are comprised from open and privilege sources. Figures do not include reports discounted as piracy following analysis by Dryad.

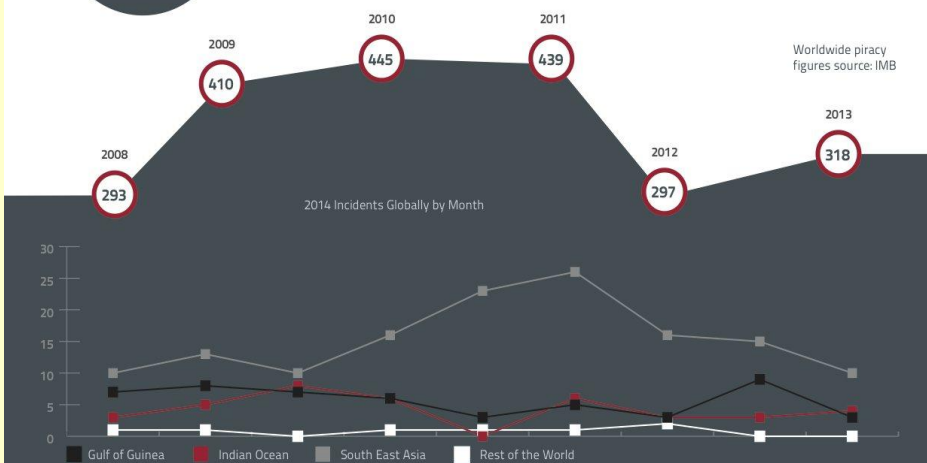
Figures correct at time of print (01/10/2014)



26 crew kidnapped in 2014



Estimated total number of crew in captivity



According to Dryad, the total number of attacks (see the breakdown below) in Southeast Asia for the year to October 1 was 139. This compares to 51 in the Gulf of Guinea and 38 in the Indian Ocean. The International Maritime Bureau's piracy map, which charts all piracy activity for the year, shows particular activity around the Singapore Strait. The IMB has issued several warnings for vessels in the Singapore Strait this year. It was in this strait between Singapore and the Indonesian island of Batam that a Vietnamese-flagged vessel was hijacked earlier this month. The hijacking of the Sunrise 689 and its 18 crew demonstrated the renewed dangers of piracy in the region. **While the crew was unhurt, the pirates absconded with 2000 metric tons of oil out of 7200 metric tons on board.**

The figures are disheartening because, after a peak of activity in 2000, over the last decade there has been a concerted and largely successful effort by Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore to engage in joint counter-piracy activity.

While the numbers are alarming, a breakdown show a lower intensity of incidents in the region, namely robberies over hijackings and attacks. But regardless, the funds from these activities go to supporting and extending criminality in the region. Profits from hijacking and maritime robbery has significantly increased the capability of insurgent and terrorist groups (think Somalia). Thankfully, joint counter-piracy



operations have come a long way and with shared (indeed, global) interests in the straits any significant escalation will see a strong crackdown. The immediate impact is likely to be a stepping up of joint counter-piracy operations.

'Terrorist' murdered soldier 'in cold blood,' Canada's Prime Minister says

Source: <http://edition.cnn.com/2014/10/22/world/americas/canada-ottawa-shooting/index.html>

First a soldier guarding a hallowed war memorial was gunned down in Canada's capital. Then shots erupted in the halls of the country's Parliament minutes later.

The two shootings in Ottawa Wednesday left lawmakers barricaded inside offices and parts of the city on lockdown for hours as police searched for suspects.

Ottawa Police lifted the lockdown Wednesday night and said there was no longer a danger to the public. But many questions remain about the shootings: Who was the gunman? Why did he open fire? And was he acting alone?

"It appears there was just one shooter, and that shooter is dead," Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson told CNN's Anderson Cooper. "But it has been a traumatic experience, obviously, for not only our city but the country."



Investigators haven't provided any possible motives for the shooting. Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper didn't provide details about the investigation in a televised address to the nation Wednesday night.

"In the days to come, we will learn more about the terrorist and any accomplices he may have had, but this week's events are a grim reminder that Canada is not immune to the types of terrorist attacks we have seen elsewhere in the world," Harper said. "Let there be no misunderstanding: We will not be intimidated. Canada will never be intimidated."

It is unclear whether additional suspects were tied to the shootings or whether additional arrests have been made. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police said more information would be provided in a press conference Thursday.

As authorities continued to investigate, details began to emerge about the man they suspect was behind the shooting.

Michael Zehaf-Bibeau was identified by Canadian officials to their American counterparts as the suspected gunman, multiple U.S. officials told CNN.



Bibeau, who was born in 1982, was a convert to Islam and had a history of drug use before he converted, two sources said.

His passport had been confiscated by Canadian authorities when they learned he planned to go fight overseas, a U.S. law enforcement official told CNN's Susan Candiotti. The official said it was not clear when that happened.

Canadian broadcaster CBC reported that Bibeau had a record of drug arrests going back 10 years.

'Murdered in cold blood'



Cpl. Nathan Cirillo was "murdered in cold blood" as he stood guard at the Canada War Memorial, Harper said, expressing condolences to the slain Canadian soldier's family.

The soldier appeared to have been shot in the back, said Peter Henderson, a journalist who was at the memorial at the time of the shooting. Other soldiers who were nearby doing drills at the time ran to help, he said.

Three people brought to The Ottawa Hospital after the shootings have been released, hospital spokeswoman Hazel Harding told CNN. Earlier, they were described as being in stable condition.

Shortly after the shooting at the memorial, a gunman entered the nearby building on Parliament Hill, officials said.

"I heard rapid fire -- gunshots going very loud -- and I figure maybe 20-plus shots within 10 seconds," Canadian Deputy House Leader Kevin Lamoureux told CNN. He was one level below the gunshots.

Gunfire first erupted in the building's foyer. Then a second round of shooting happened about a minute later in a hallway or near the entrance to the Parliament's library, Wingrove told CNN.

Several officers had weapons drawn, he said, and most of the dozens of shots that he heard appeared to have been fired by officers at the gunman.



When the shooting ended, a person was lying motionless on the ground near the library entrance, Wingrove said.

Parliament member James Lunney tweeted: #HOC in Lockdown, lone gunman shot security guard, shot his way down Hall of Honor....we are all safe. Gunman dead! Thank God & our scrtly!"



In Twitter posts, several Canadian lawmakers hailed a top security official as a hero, crediting him with shooting the gunman inside Parliament.

"MPs and Hill staff owe their safety, even lives, to Sergeant at Arms Kevin Vickers who shot attacker just outside the MPs' caucus rooms," Craig Scott, a member of Parliament, wrote.

Another soldier killed Monday

A U.S. law enforcement official told CNN that a connection to terrorism hasn't been ruled out.

On Monday, a man who Canadian authorities said was "radicalized" killed a Canadian soldier with his car. The man was then shot and killed.

There was no immediate indication that the Monday and Wednesday incidents were related.

In response to the shootings, the North American Aerospace Defense Command, or NORAD, has increased its alert posture, CNN has learned. That means that it has increased the number of planes on a higher alert status ready to respond if needed. NORAD and Canadian authorities are in contact, an official told CNN.

Prime Minister secure during shooting

MP Tony Clement tweeted that he heard "at least 30 shots" and apparently was able to take cover with colleagues. He also tweeted that Prime Minister Harper was secure.

Harper was evacuated from the building and is safe, tweeted his press secretary, Carl Vallee.

Hours after the Parliament attack, Harper spoke by phone with U.S. President Barack Obama.

"Obviously, we're all shaken by it," Obama later told reporters, "but we're going to do everything we can to make sure we're standing side by side with Canada during this difficult time."

Watson said that Wednesday was "a sad and tragic day for our city and our country."

"There's no pain greater than losing a loved one -- to have it happen in such circumstances as this morning is beyond expression, and underlined by a sad anger within my heart," he said.

Canada raised its terror threat level

The violence at Parliament comes just days after Canada raised its terror alert Friday.

The suspect in Monday's vehicle attack, Martin Rouleau Couture, reportedly converted to Islam about a year ago. Police arrested him last July and confiscated his passport, but lacked enough evidence to keep him in custody, said Martine Fontaine of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

"When he was arrested, he was about to go to Turkey," Fontaine said. "We stopped him as he was about to leave Canada for terrorist actions. He was questioned when he was arrested. We have not been able to determine any real threat at this time."

Islamist Terrorism in Canada

Source: http://acdemocracy.org/islamist-terrorism-in-canada/?utm_source=Islamist+Terrorism+in+Canada&utm_campaign=Islamist+Terrorism+in+Canada&utm_medium=email

October 23 – The terror attacks in Montreal and Ottawa Canada were a sure thing.

The recent jihadist attacks in Montreal and Ottawa came after years of repeated calls by Canadian Islamists' religious and "civic" leaders – including Imams and new converts to Islam to join the jihad against the West. They use mosques, Islamic centers, demonstrations, YouTube, print and print, online and social media. Though most state they are not supporting the ISIS, they advocate the same deadly jihad ideology.

However, despite ISIS proven brutality and heightened recruitment campaigns, many in the West, including the U.S. and Canada

continue to chronically suffer from Political Correctness, refusing to identify the jihadist as Muslims.

While not all Muslims are jihadists, all jihadists are Muslims.

Muhammad Robert Heft, the Toronto based convert to Islam, is a good example. Heft, founded and runs the Paradise Forever, (P4E Support Group Inc.), as a part of his Da'wah (proselytization efforts). Heft is also the Canadian representative for Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Charity and Humanitarian Establishment based in Dubai UAE,

بن محمد مؤسسه (الإخيرية للأعمال) مكنوم آل راشد



(والإذ ساذي -
https://www.facebook.com/mrheft/info?ref=page_internal), a member of the Union of Good, an umbrella organization that supports Hamas. The Union of Good was declared an “unlawful organization” in 2002 by the Israeli government and The U.S. Treasury Department designated it an SDGT in 2008 because of its ties to Hamas.

On his Facebook, Heft blames “Westerners” of “terrorism” aimed at the Muslim world. He argues that “Islamic terrorism” is an “oxymoron” because Muslims “use the Quran and the Sunnah [Muhammad’s way of life] as their guide.” Moreover, western capitalism is prone to terrorism by its nature, because “terrorism can be very profitable,” he claims.

Incredibly, Heft also serves as a community outreach liaison on Islamist radicalization for Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP).

Last year two major terrorist plots were thwarted. In April 2013, the RCMP arrested Chihab Esseghaier, resident of Montreal of Tunisian descent, and Raed Jaser, a Kuwaiti of Palestinian descent, on suspicion of planning to blow up VIA train on Niagara bridge on course to the US. Three months later John Stewart Nuttall and Amanda Marie Korody, both converts to Islam who lived as a couple, were arrested on suspicion of planning to bomb parliament building in Victoria, BC.

Earlier this month the heads of the RCMP and Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), told a Parliamentary committee that between 130 to 145 Canadian left the country to join wide range of terrorist activities abroad; 30 of them went to Syria and 80 returned to Canada. And Public Safety Minister, Steven Blaney, revealed that there are currently 63 open federal police investigations into about 100 suspected terrorists in Canada.

A treasure trove of detailed information on other Canadian Muslims’ preaching participation in jihad can be found on an ACD’s Fellow, Jonathan D. Halevi’s blog, Alternative Angle. Yet, Canadian media outlets have ridiculed Prime Minister Stephen Harper’s repeated warnings that “the threat posed by ISIL is real... [if this threat is left unchecked it] “can only grow and grow quickly.”such threats “are very, very real.”

Indeed, Canadian nationals who left the country and joined ISIS comprise severe security threat. Canadian ISIS sympathizers

boast about their pledges of allegiance to ISIS and its self proclaimed Caliph, on social media. Calgarian Farah Shirdon, who joined ISIS and burned his Canadian passport, explicitly threatened Canada, in a propaganda video, the U.S. and “all oppressors”: “We are coming and we will destroy you by the will of God,” Shirdon says on the video and added: “we are coming to slaughter you.”

Canadian convert to Islam, who joined ISIS and is known by the alias “Abu Khalid Al-Kanadi,” called on “True Canadian Muslims” to launch attacks in reaction to Canada’s help to the international military campaign against ISIS. On October 4 he wrote in his Twitter account the following twits calling Muslims “to Fulfill your duty of Jihad in Canada. Abu Khalid Al-Kanadi echoed ISIS official threatening message issued on September 21, 2014, “Indeed Your Lord Is Ever Watchful” in which all countries participating in the military coalition, including the U.S. Canada, were warned of the future implications to their security by their own Muslim citizens who were called upon to carry out the jihad at home.

“O soldiers of the Islamic State, be ready for the final campaign of the crusaders... O America, O allies of America, and O crusaders, know that the matter is more dangerous than you have imagined and greater than you have envisioned...we promise you by Allah’s permission that this campaign will be your final campaign. It will be broken and defeated, just as all your previous campaigns were broken and defeated, except that this time we will raid you thereafter, and you will never raid us. We will conquer your Rome, break your crosses, and enslave your women, by the permission of Allah, the Exalted...“It is you who started the transgression against us, and thus you deserve blame and you will pay a great price. You will pay the price when your economies collapse. You will pay the price when your sons are sent to wage war against us and they return to you as disabled amputees, or inside coffins, or mentally ill. You will pay the price as you are afraid of travelling to any land. Rather you will pay the price as you walk on your streets, turning right and left, fearing the Muslims. You will not feel secure even in your bedrooms...” And on and on.

“The civilian outfit does not make blood illegal to spill, and the military uniform does not make blood legal to spill. The only



things that make blood illegal and legal to spill are Islam and a covenant (peace treaty, dhimma, etc.). Blood becomes legal to spill through disbelief. So whoever is a Muslim, his blood and wealth are sanctified. And whoever is a disbeliever, his wealth is legal for a Muslim to take and his blood is legal to spill. His blood is like the blood of a dog; there is no sin for him in spilling it nor is there any blood money to be paid for doing such...

"If you are not able to find an IED or a bullet, then single out the disbelieving American, Frenchman, or any of their allies. Smash his head with a rock, or slaughter him with a knife, or run him over with your car, or throw him down from a high place, or choke him, or poison him. Do not lack. Do not be contemptible. Let your slogan be, "May I not be

saved if the cross worshiper and taught (ruling by man made laws) patron survives. If you are unable to do so, then burn his home, car, or business. Or destroy his crops..."

These calls do not distinguish between the politically correct in Canada and elsewhere who refrain from identifying the 'soldiers of Allah' as Muslims. Like all infidels, they too will be slaughtered. The jihadists are Muslims believers, who like ISIS will do what it takes to kill as many infidels as they are allowed to target.

The latest attacks in Canada should serve as a wake up call to Canadian, Americans and the rest of the West: if you refrain from undermining the Islamist ideology, it will only grow stronger to destroy you.

The latest trend in Jihadist recruitment in the West: Women

Source: <http://www.homelandsecuritynewswire.com/dr20140916-the-latest-trend-in-jihadist-recruitment-in-the-west-women>

Counterterrorism officials have been dealing with the threat of Westerners traveling to the Middle East to join the Islamic State (IS), but now they must also combat the growing threat of American female Jihadists joining IS and other militant groups, including Somali-based, al-Shabaab. In the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, at least four Somali families have had female relatives gone missing in recent weeks. Community leader, Abdirizak Bihi, whose teenaged nephew was killed in Somalia in 2009 after traveling from Minnesota to join al-Shabaab, says that though reasons for some disappearances remain unclear, Jihadi recruitment could be the blame. One of the cases is that of a 19-year-old American Somali woman from St. Paul who left home on 25 August for an alleged bridal shower, but instead flew to Turkey to join IS in Syria.

With America's largest population of Somali immigrants, the Minnesota-St. Paul area has been plagued by Jihadi recruitment efforts from members of al-Shabaab and IS. This year, at least fifteen men connected to the Somali community in Minnesota have been confirmed as militants in Syria. The *Homeland Security News Wire* recently reported on Douglas McAuthur McCain, a Muslim convert who was killed this summer while fighting with IS.

Greg Boosalis, the FBI division counsel in Minneapolis, said law enforcement has been

investigating possible recruitment rings in the area. While some American Jihadi converts were recruited via the Web as was Shannon Conley, who was arrested just before she boarded a flight to the Middle East to join IS, recruits in Minnesota are thought to be led by local Islamist sympathizers.

The *Guardian* reports that female recruitment for Jihadi groups have caught many community leaders by surprise. "The nature of the recruitment of these crazy organizations is how they use the element of surprise. Now they have surprised us again by going for the girls," said Bihi, speaking about the St. Paul woman who he said was targeted by recruiters. Mia Bloom, from the center for terrorism and security studies at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, warns that female recruits are often misinformed when they join terror groups. While they envision aiding a holy war or playing an active role in establishing a caliphate, "ISIS is recruiting these women in order to be baby factories. They are seeing the establishment of an Islamic state and now they need to populate the state," Bloom said.

Photos and videos of female Jihadists on Islamic social networks show them enforcing Islamic dress codes on local women in captured villages, and even cooking for their male counterparts. "The girls go around



making cookies. It's almost like a jihadi Tupperware party," Bloom said. As militant groups step up their recruitment efforts in the United States, counterterrorism officials are most concerned with radicalized American citizens returning home to carry out an attack. "The obvious fear is of individuals coming back and committing a terrorist act

here," said Boosalis. President Barack Obama has pledged to assist government agencies "intervene with at-risk individuals before they become radicalized toward violence and decide to travel abroad to Syria and Iraq to join Isis." Adding that authorities would offer "tailored domestic programs to prevent violent extremism and radicalization."

Ottawa shootings: a spectacular failure for Canadian intelligence

Source: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/22/ottawa-shootings-canadian-intelligence-failure>

October 23 – They brought the war to Canada. That's the thought running through the heads of many Canadians as the national capital remained in lockdown into Wednesday evening, following an assault on the national parliament amid a debate on whether to engage Isis in Iraq and how to defend against Islamic extremism at home.

My day should have begun with a walk through the Hall of Honour, the grand, central ceremonial hall at the heart of parliament. That's where the shootings began and, seemingly, ended. Other journalists had assembled there for "outs" — our attempt to catch ministers and MPs as they leave their weekly caucus meeting in rooms adjacent to



Michael Zehaf-Bibeau, armed with a high-powered rifle, drove to Parliament Hill, left his car running, shot a ceremonial guard at the nearby National War Memorial, before heading to the seat of Canada's democracy, where he was gunned down by the head of security for the building.

In a room just a few metres from where the gunman fell, prime minister Stephen Harper was discussing how to respond to the increased threat of homegrown terrorism with members of his party. That response will be even more treacherous now.

the hall. Instead, I was upstairs trying to grab breakfast. As I headed down, a member of parliament frantically opened the door to the stairs, desperately warning that a shooter was on the loose.

Since then, I've been barricaded in a room, with a government minister, other MPs and staffers, all waiting to be evacuated. Before the shots rang out, and just a few steps away, the prime minister and his caucus were discussing how best to tackle the growing scourge of homegrown



terrorism. That discussion was spurred by an attack against Canadian military personal on Monday, and amid increasingly urgent reports from Canada’s intelligence agencies that the homegrown terror threat was very real.

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) released a report this month, saying it had identified 90 radicalized Canadians who were either trying to leave Canada and fight for the Islamic State (Isis) militants in Iraq, or planning to launch attacks in Canada.

One such radical was Martin Rouleau-Couture, a Quebecer who had converted to Islam and had already attempted to travel Iraq to fight with Isis there. He killed a veteran member of the Canadian forces in an attack near a Quebec military base on Monday.

It was not clear on Wednesday night whether Zehaf-Bibeau was on that list too. (UPDATE: he was not).

These two attacks constitute a spectacular failure for CSIS, which had claimed to be actively protecting the country against a plethora of terrorist threats.

While the threat level was raised in the day before Wednesday’s attack, there appeared to be no serious escalation in security near parliament. In a committee hearing earlier in the month, the director of CSIS promised parliamentarians that that the threat was real, but not imminent.

The new legislation being pondered by Harper’s government would reportedly expand

the powers of CSIS to investigate, apprehend and detain homegrown terrorists.

Early reports of the yet-to-be-introduced legislation indicate that CSIS wants the power to take advantage of the so-called “Five Eyes” spy network to which Canada, the United Kingdom, America, Australia and New Zealand all belong. The service is also requesting more power to track Canadians they believe have been radicalized, and to take more advantage of anonymous sources.

But given that the government has already accorded the spy agencies ever-more powers in recent years, questions remain about why there is even a need for more tools.

Powers crafted in 2012 enable law enforcement to arrest and prosecute Canadians who try to leave the country to fight for a terrorist organization. That raises the question of why Rouleau-Couture was not apprehended well before he carried out his attack on Monday. In addition to those powers, the law establishes secret courts to compel material witnesses or accomplices to divulge information about prospective terror attacks.

That legislation also gives police the power to preventatively arrest would-be terrorists. In the coming days, it’s all but certain that those powers will be employed to ensure that copycat attacks won’t be launched against other installations across the country.

EDITOR’S COMMENT: Another fine example of the consequences of living in own capsule isolated by the rest of the world. And a good example for all those thinking that if it is far away is not of "our concern". Today nothing is far away and nothing is impossible.





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